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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. February 1900.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(7063.)

195

F.O.
424

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6959.]

January to March 1898.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. *July* 1898.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6959.]

No. 1.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 3, 1898.)

(No. 838.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 24, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, reporting greater tranquillity in the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 106.)

Sir, *Jeddah, November* 30, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that a few petty robberies have taken place in this neighbourhood and that of Mecca, and one or two committed on sailing craft on the part of Bedouins during the last few weeks, but on the whole the Hedjaz has been quieter.

Medina was relieved nearly a month ago, a large caravan of 5 to 6,000 camels having proceeded there from Yembo, as may be mentioned in connection with my despatch No. 90 of the 12th October.

Since some three or four months it was half expected here that the Imperial Government would in the end find itself compelled to take some active steps for chastising and reducing the Bedouins to a better state of discipline, but there now seem to be no signs of this. Only a fortnight ago, it was reported that the Arabs were collecting in large numbers between here and Mecca for some sort of hostile demonstration against the Grand Shereef or Government, but it would seem that more peaceful counsels prevailed, and at this moment delegates are discussing at Mecca their grievances, with hopes of an amicable solution.

It is announced, as I have already reported, that the Vali will be at Jeddah very shortly.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 2.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 3, 1898.)

(No. 839. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 24, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, respecting the views and movements of Dr. Hepworth, the representative of the "New York Herald," now travelling in Asia Minor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 47. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 8, 1897.

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report that the special representative of the "New York Herald," Dr. Hepworth, after spending twelve days at Erzeroum, started on the 6th instant, for Bitlis. An attempt was made by the Turkish officials who accompany him to dissuade him from visiting Bitlis, and to take him *viâ* Erzingian to Sivas, but, after a sharp struggle, Dr. Hepworth succeeded in overcoming their objections.

Dr. Hepworth struck me as being quite disinterested and impartial with regard to the Armenian question, both sides of which he has had opportunities of hearing during his stay at Erzeroum. The same cannot be said of his associate Mr. S. Whitman between whom and Dr. Hepworth considerable divergences of opinion seem to exist on this subject.

Both these gentlemen have been impressed by what they have heard of the dangers of the Kurdish question, and expressed their intention of reporting upon it and suggesting the adoption of a remedial policy. They are also giving a very favourable account of the administration of his Excellency Raouf Pasha, the Vali of Erzeroum.

I had the honour to report the substance of the above to your Excellency by telegraph to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 3.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 14, 1898.)

(No. 842.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the state of the mountain districts of Meuks and Shattakh and the difficulties of relief work there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Vice-Consul Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 56.)
Sir, *Van, December* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that I returned from a tour in the mountain districts of Meuks and and Shattakh on the 5th December.

The weather was favourable, and I only lost one day owing to snow.

The pass from Shattakh to Van is still open for pack animals, but owing to fear of being shut up in Shattakh the drivers demand practically prohibitive rates.

The poverty in Shattakh is greater than any I have seen elsewhere. In every village are numbers of nearly naked people. Food is very scarce. The seeds of a wild plant called goringan are collected and eaten by the people. These, however, afford but little nutriment and are injurious to health. The appearance of the people leaves no doubt as to the reality of their distress.

A certain amount of cloth has been distributed, but only to the most needy. If funds had allowed, three times as much might have been given with advantage. The great difficulty has been about food. About one-third of what we estimated as the minimum necessary has been purchased locally. For the rest the high cost of transport prevents as sending any over.

The local officials are co-operating and appear desirous of rendering all assistance. They are, however, powerless to deal with the root of the evil, the lawlessness of the Kurds. As an instance, the Kaïmakam of Shattakh sent a detachment of troops to arrest two noted Kurds. The Officer in Command did not wish to carry out his orders, though it was in his power to have done so, and returned with nothing effected.

Very few sheep are now owned by Armenians, and but little cattle except those distributed by the relief. The contrast between Kurdish and Armenian houses is very striking. In the former, wheaten or barley bread, curds, cheese, milk, bedding, clothing, warmth, and all that constitutes comfort for the rural population of this country. In [? the latter], little but millet, walnuts, the seeds spoken of above, a few filthy rags and bits of carpet or felt, is about all that is left. Kurdish sheep now feed in the Armenian pastures, and are folded at night in Armenian villages. This latter is, however, rather a boon, as the heat of the animals' bodies helps to keep the rooms warm and their dung serves for fuel. It is for this reason that the sheep and cattle in this country are under the same roof as the inhabitants.

The loss of their sheep is a most serious deprivation. An important part of the people's food is the milk, cheese, and curds. Millet bread, walnuts, and goringan seeds alone form a miserable diet, especially for the young and weakly. Without wool they cannot renew their clothing. The loss of the warmth afforded by the presence of the animals as mentioned above is also serious during the long bitter winter of these parts.

I have visited villages where formerly there were several thousand sheep, and where now hardly any are left.

Milk and ordinary supplies are in most Armenian villages, in Shattakh at any rate, unobtainable.

Kurds are settling in Armenian villages, appropriating their lands and pastures, and making the inhabitants serve them.

A little firmness would soon put an end to this, but there is little chance of this firmness being exhibited as long as the hands of the Executive are tied as they are at present.

In Meuks the poverty struck me as not being nearly so great as in Shattakh. The people of Meuks generally leave in large numbers in the beginning of winter, and go to Russia or elsewhere to work or beg, returning in spring to cultivate their lands. This has been stopped this year, presumably on account of the troubles caused by the Armenian revolutionists on the frontier, and the poverty that exists is largely due to this cause.

The people of Meuks owe their somewhat better condition to the protection and help afforded by Mortoolla Bey, a Kurd. Mortoolla Bey is the son of Khan Abdal Bey, of the family of Badar Khan Bey, of Jezire.

I was his guest for four nights, and was much struck by his advanced and liberal views. He is not liked by the Local Government officials and Kurds, who are somewhat afraid of him. He protected the Armenians of Meuks during the disturbances of last year, and has helped the villagers with seed and cattle. Whilst I was with him he fed daily twenty or thirty poor women and children.

I had heard him most highly spoken of by all the Armenians, and had been told that the best way of relieving distress in Meuks was to send what money could be spared to him.

He is disgusted with the state of affairs in Meuks, and contemplates selling his property and leaving it for good. Should he do so it will be a misfortune for the Armenians in those parts.

Meuks can now only be approached from Van on foot over high passes deep in snow. It was thus impossible to do anything but take money over.

I handed over to Mortoolla Bey £ E. 50, and have every confidence that it will be well applied.

The poverty and distress of the Armenian population of this vilayet is extreme. I find it impossible, however, to arrive at a correct estimate of its amount. The safest way is to judge by the appearance of the people, and by actually searching their houses for food. Many hide what they have, and come into Van to beg.

Personally, I do not feel disposed to trust any Armenian either to distribute relief or to report correctly on those who most need it. This enormously increases the difficulty of helping the many who are actually perishing from want.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 4.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 3, 1898.)

(No. 848.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, respecting the appointments of Mudirs in the Jebel Druse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 60.)
Sir, *Damascus, December* 17, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 15th ultimo, reporting among other things, the flight to Suedah of the Mudirs of Melah, Salkhad, Shahba and A'ahreh, the first three villages being in the Jebel Druse while the last mentioned is in the Lejah, I have now the honour to report to your Excellency that the Vali informed me in the course of a conversation I had with him yesterday, that he had appointed new Mudirs to the three first named villages, and would very shortly make a fresh appointment in the fourth. The names of the new Mudirs are Hamoud Bey, sent to Shahba, Rhalil Amer to Salkhad and Mahmoud Amer (brother of the latter) to Melah. Of these three functionaries, the last named only has never previously occupied an official position.

The Vali informed me subsequently, in reply to my enquiries, that although the Imperial Government adhered to their resolution of maintaining the principle of making the conscription obligatory both for the Druses and Hauranese (Moslems), yet, as a matter of fact, it was not intended, as a question of policy, that this resolution should take effect in the immediate future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

P.S.—I should mention that Hamoud Bey, the new Mudir of Shahba, is the son of Ibrahim Bey (afterwards Pasha) El Attrash formerly Caimacam of the Jebel Druse and scion of the noblest Druse family in the Hauran. The other two Mudirs are also Druses.

W. S. R.

No. 5.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 10.)

(No. 1.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 3, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas respecting a journey undertaken by him through the northern portion of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Sivas, December* 17, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward the following notes on my journey through Erzeroum and Erzingian to my post:—

I passed through the Cazas of Sushehri, Kochkiri, and Hafik, in the north-eastern portion of the vilayet.

The harvest has been above the average, but in the cazas above mentioned they find great difficulty in sending the corn to a profitable market. Money is scarce, and prices rule as low as 1 kile of 160 okes for 50 piastres, or 4 cwt. for 10*s.* 6*d.*

I am informed that the proceeds of the tithes in this vilayet, which is a fairly rich one, show a decrease of £ T. 50,000 for last year, and a further decrease of £ T. 50,000 for this year. The road from Kara-Hissar Sharki to Kerasund is scarcely ever in sufficiently good repair for arabas, while that from Sivas to Ordu, by Kecheyurt and Hamidie, is very difficult owing to the high ranges crossed before reaching the coast.

On both these roads the cost of transport is too great to permit of corn being sent profitably to the coast.

The tithe ("bedel-i-ushur") is now at one-eighth instead of one-tenth, and this the villagers seemed to think too high.

The military exemption tax ("bedel-i-askeric") is 2 mejidie for every male, no matter what age. An annual revision takes place in the numbers in each village liable to taxation. The abuse of dead people being counted does not at present seem to exist in these cazas.

Having passed through Sivas, Enderes, and Zara before the massacres (five years ago), I can notice a marked difference between these places then and now. At present they appear half in ruins, with trade almost stagnant, then they were fairly flourishing. The Kaimakam of Sushehri, who lives at Enderes, was away in his district when I passed through, but in the various villages through which I passed he was spoken of as a very good and energetic man, and seemed well liked. He was appointed after the massacres, and has been there for one and a-half years.

The largest Armenian villages in this caza are Enderes (600 houses), Ezbider (300 houses), with smaller villages of Piurkh, Alamelik, Kirtanos Sevindere, and Mishaknutz, of about thirty houses each. There are others, part Moslem and part Armenian. There are five Greek villages at the western, and one, Geullu Boru, at the east end of the caza. I saw Tahir Bey, the Kaimakam of Kochkiri Caza, living at Zara.

He is well meaning, but weak, senile, and useless. He was appointed because he was a friend of a former Vali, Memduh Pasha, now Minister of the Interior.

He does not possess the necessary diploma as laid down in the scheme of reforms.

In the mountains at the west end of the caza are several Greek villages, mostly of wood-cutters. At the east end are a number of villages of Kizildish Kurds, who sometimes give trouble. A large Kurdish Derebey, Mustafa Bey, lives at Chit, in this district.

This man has recently been imprisoned here for no specified crime, but has now been released, and has returned to Chit.

The Kaimakam of Hafik, one Artin Kezarian, an Armenian, was dismissed two

months ago for excessive zeal in pursuing and bringing to justice some Turks who had forcibly abducted an Armenian girl from the village of Yarhissar. Such is the report, and I can find no other crime against him.

The case of this Armenian girl is not yet concluded, and I propose to report further on it.

A Greek, to succeed this Kaïmakam, is said to be on his way from Constantinople, but has not yet arrived. A very good Mahommedan Kaïmakam is now acting as Vakil.

Ikiades Bey, the Muavin to the Vali of Sivas, returned here from leave of absence on the 16th instant.

The roads in this vilayet are just now in very good repair, many necessary repairs having been executed just previous to Shakir Pasha's passing over them.

A good "chaussée" has been finished this summer between Erzingian and the Kara-Hissar road near Enderes, thus completing a good military road between Sivas and Erzingian. I am told also that during last summer a great deal of traffic has passed from Sivas through Tokat and Niksar to the post of Unie.

This represents a shorter line to the sea than the usual route through Samsun. A "chaussée" has been constructed in this vilayet from Tokat through Niksar to the frontier of the Trebizond vilayet, but the bridges and alignment are not yet completed in the latter vilayet.

Arabas can, however, reach Unie by this way, and the price of transport is some 20 per cent. cheaper than by the Samsun road. The general state of affairs in this vilayet is at present very quiet.

There are no rumours of revolutionary agitation among the Armenians, who seem quite cowed.

The Vali received a telegram on the 16th instant saying that all possible revenue which he could procure was to be forwarded weekly to Constantinople, and for the present do not pay any officials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL.

No. 6.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 4.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 569 of the 29th August, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the action of the authorities in regard to the abduction of Armenian women by Moslems.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 55.)
Sir, *Kharput, December 21, 1897.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 34, dated the 9th August last, transmitting a list containing the names of eleven Armenian girls abducted by Moslems at Hékim Han during the disturbances there, I now have the honour to report to your Excellency that the measures taken by the Vali to effect the release of the young women in question have, in the case of all but one of them, proved unavailing.

Raouf Bey states that, in reply to a telegram ordering that immediate action should be taken to ensure justice being done in the matter, the Mutessarif of Malatia telegraphed, after the lapse of some weeks, that a careful inquiry had been made at Hékim Han resulting in the refusal of all but one of the women to quit their

abductors and return to their friends. The Vali, thereupon, wired further instructions to the Mutessarif to the effect that all the women referred to should be conveyed to Malatia, and there receive every assurance from the authorities, in the presence of the Catholic and Gregorian Bishops, that they were free to return to their families and to their original faith. These instructions, however, although strictly carried out, were of no material efficacy, as the women—with the afore-mentioned exception—persisted in refusing to abandon their Moslem husbands and the Mussulman creed.

Considering the length of time which has elapsed since the date of their abduction and the fact of the Armenians, in general, being an unusually prolific race, it may be not unreasonable to surmise that most of the abducted women have either already borne, or are expecting shortly to bear children to their Moslem cohabitors: and in that case their unwillingness to re-enter the Armenian community (among whom their chance of marriage would henceforth be very slight) and to face possible destitution, accentuated by the care and support of an illegitimate child, would appear far from unnatural or unjustifiable.

I beg herewith to enclose extract from a letter addressed to me with regard to the abduction of a Christian girl, named Gourjou, from the village of Belveren, near Behesni. Upon receipt of that letter I suggested to the Vali that instructions should be wired to the Kaïmakam for the girl to be brought to Behesni, and there set at liberty. My suggestion was in part adopted, and, according to a long telegraphic reply received from the Kaimakam and read to me by Raouf Bey, Gourjou was brought before the Behesni Administrative Council, of which the principal Armenian priest in the caza is a member, and was assured that she might, without fear or trammel, return to her grand-parents and to Christianity; but she refused, saying that she had eloped of her own accord, was now married to Eumer and intended to remain with her husband and adhere to his faith. In reply to a further question from Raouf Bey as to the girl's age, the Kaïmakam telegraphed yesterday that she is at least 19 and possibly more. This assumption, in this instance, may or may not be correct, but Gourjou's own statement before the Council was very likely dictated by fear. The Mussulman law merely stipulates that, in such cases as the above, a Rajah shall not be recognized as a convert to Islamism before attaining the age of 15 years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 6

Extract from a Letter addressed to Vice-Consul Fontana.

"I BELIEVE Mr. —— wrote you about the village of Belveren, near Behesni, and upon instructions from Kharput they were called to the Government (the Christians there who had turned to save their lives) and turned Christian again. Since that time the Moslem neighbours have, though quite cross, not hurt them until about two weeks ago. Then a girl, Gourjou, grand-daughter of Mardiros Kouyunjian (father not living) was outside the village with a couple of Christian women washing, when two young Moslems—Jumbel Oglou Eumer and Temal Beyin Kaimi Vakas—came upon them and knocked the women down and ran off with the girl. Plenty of Moslem women were around but none interfered. The Behesni Government ordered Temal Bey (Mudir of Belveren) to get the girl, but he will not stir. At the time the Mudir refused to interfere. The girl, according to last accounts was in a village in our vilayet (Aleppo), but so near this village that she could be reclaimed any day if the Mudir so wished. If this passes unpunished, of course, these poor Christians will have a pretty rough time. But no Moslem helped in any way at the time to save her, though there were very many of them about. The girl is said to be about 12 years old."

November 27, 1897.

No. 7.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 5.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 323 of the 14th ultimo, I sent a Circular telegram to the Consular officers in the districts where the funds collected for the distressed Armenians by the Duke of Westminster's Committee have been distributed, asking whether they could hold out reasonable hope that any further relief that may be given during the coming year will be secure from seizure by Kurds and tax collectors.

I have now the honour to inclose a Memorandum giving the substance of the answers I have received.

I may add that, although the reports of the Consuls show a considerable improvement in the condition of the people, there is still urgent need for help to the widows and orphans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Memorandum of Substance of Consular Reports.

Erzeroum, December 28, 1897.

IN the present financial embarrassment of the Government, the increasing demands of tax collectors tend to defeat the efforts of the distributors of relief; though only indirectly, since help during this winter having chiefly been given in kind, and only in small quantities, has as a rule escaped seizure.

Owing to the efforts of the Vali, those who receive help are not likely to be molested by Kurds.

Bitlis, December 28, 1897.

The severity of the winter is the only protection which the recipients of cattle, seed, or money in the villages are likely to receive. Those in the town, to whom only bread is given, will probably not be molested.

Diarbekir, December 28, 1897.

An immediate advance would be valuable in this district, if there is any further money available for it, in order that relief may be distributed at the same time in outlying places, and that the influx into the town of villagers desiring help may thus be prevented.

Those who receive relief in this village are tolerably sure of protection.

Sivas, December 28, 1897.

Occasional seizures by tax collectors may take place, but relief in form given is difficult to take away. There is little danger in this vilayet from Kurdish depredations.

Kharput, December 29, 1897.

Last year, only a very small proportion of the sum given in relief fell into the hands of the tax collectors. A stringent order given to the Vali, for communication to the minor authorities, might diminish this even further. However, the collectors will doubtless try to seize the money.

Unless the Kurds are incited there is little to fear from them.

Van, December 30, 1897.

Although abuses unhappily occur owing to the weakness of the Government, I think that, except in one or two districts, there is little danger of money distributed being seized by tax collectors or Kurds, since complaints about such matters are always attended to at once.

Aleppo, December 29, 1897.

There is no possible protection for recipients of relief from tax collectors, brigands, or Kurds.

All that can be done is to make the distribution as private as possible.

Mersina, January 1, 1897.

In this vilayet, I can guarantee that no molestation shall occur.

No. 8.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 6.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

IN my despatch No. 14 of the 17th January, 1897, I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship a list of certain demands addressed by the Armenian Patriarchate to the Sultan and of the concessions made by His Majesty.

These concessions, as I then pointed out to your Lordship, so modified the demands formulated by the Patriarch as to render them practically valueless, but such as they were they have never been executed.

I am now informed that the Patriarch has made a further appeal to the Palace, and has presented to the Sultan's First Secretary a memorial setting forth the most pressing grievances of the Armenian community under the sixteen following heads:

1. Permission to collect subscriptions for orphans and needy persons, and for repairing churches that have been destroyed.
2. Permission for traders to travel from one province to another.
3. Temporary remission of military exemption tax.
4. Permission for return of Armenians who have claims against Government Departments or others.
5. Re-admission of officials and workmen formerly employed in Government Departments, &c.
6. Admission of young Armenians to Government Schools like the youths of other communities.
7. Return to Constantinople of Armenians exiled to the Provinces.
8. Permission for Patriarchal Delegates to take up their appointments and be recognized in their clerical capacity in the Provinces.
9. Permission to open schools attached to village churches.
10. Exemption from taxation of church property or property the revenues of which are devoted to ecclesiastical purposes.
11. Cessation of forced conversions.
12. Publication of announcements from the Patriarchate in the public press to be allowed by the censorship.
13. Amnesty to be extended to all such as have not yet availed themselves of it.
14. Police to refrain from arresting Armenians on their arrival in Turkey.

15 and 16 concern the Patriarchate only and are of secondary importance.

This Memorial has been referred from the Palace to the Grand Vizier but no steps have yet been taken to give effect to the very moderate and reasonable requests which it contains.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 9.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 7.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith, copy of a notice which I have received from the Sublime Porte respecting the arrests of Armenians in the Vilayet of Bitlis, mentioned in my despatch to your Lordship No. 708 of the 19th October last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No 9.

Memorandum.

LE Gouverneur-Général de Bitlis interpellé au sujet des arrestations d'Arméniens, répond que le nombre des individus arrêtés sur les décisions de la Cour d'Appel du vilayet est de 49 dont 38 sont accusés d'agissements séditieux, 7 de meurtre, 3 de vol, et un est prévenu de délit. Le Jugement des 38 d'entre eux est sur le point d'être terminé.

Les personnes mises en état d'arrestation sur les décisions du Tribunal Correctionnel de Première Instance, où les arrêts du Juge d'Instruction sont également au nombre de 49, dont 16 sont accusés de pillage, 5 de meurtre, 9 de vol, 11 de menées subversives, 5 de recel, un d'attentat aux mœurs, un de coups et blessures, et un de détournement des deniers publics. Le jugement de ces 98 détenus, dont les 52 sont Chrétiens et les autres Musulmans, s'effectue dans les formes prescrites par les lois.

Les communications nécessaires ont été néanmoins faites au Département de la Justice et aux autorités Impériales du Vilayet de Bitlis pour que la plus grande célérité y soit apportée.

Pour ce qui est de la prison du chef-lieu de la province, le Vali fait savoir que les règles de l'hygiène y étant observées d'une manière rigoureuse, aucune maladie contagieuse n'y existe. Du reste, les formalités nécessaires pour la réparation de la dite prison conformément aux exigences de la science sont en voie d'accomplissement.

No. 10.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No 9.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

THE reports of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput show that the financial condition of that vilayet is very serious, owing to the continual demands made from Constantinople upon the local treasury. Mr. Fontana states that, in order to meet the calls upon them, the local authorities are claiming thirteen years' arrears of taxes in villages which were plundered and burnt during the massacres; and that the Vali, being unable to provide the funds due to the military authorities, has intrusted part of the collection to them.

The result is, that the impoverished Armenians are being despoiled of the little they have left, and that distress is increasing every day.

I propose to call the attention of the Porte to this state of things, and to point out the deplorable results that may ensue from driving these unfortunate people to desperation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 11.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 14.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 618 of 11th September, 1897, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith, copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consulate, at Bitlis, with regard to forced conversions and the exaction of the military exemption in the Bitlis Vilayet, and the seizure by Kurds in the district of Akhlat of cattle distributed by the Relief Committee.

I communicated the substance of this despatch to the Sublime Porte, and I enclose copy of its reply denying the truth of the reports in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 11.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Bitlis, October 2, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to return, herewith, the Memorandum contained in your Excellency's despatch of 3rd September, informing me of the Porte's reply to your Excellency's representations with reference to the abstraction by Kurds of relief cattle in Akhlat.

I have the honour also to return the notice of the Sublime Porte transmitted to me in your Excellency's despatch of 11th September, with regard to conversions and military exemption tax in this district.

The total number of relief cattle given in Akhlat was 166, and of these 78 have been taken by Kurds; 26 have, indeed, been repurchased by the owners from the robbers at a cost of some 2,500 piastres, but, apart from the question of payment very inferior animals were substituted for those given by the Relief Committee. The total number of the relief cattle, therefore, left in the hands of the Kurds up to date is 52.

The forced converts to Islam in the Guendi district numbers some 900 persons, as specified in my report. These persons are desirous to revert to Christianity but are unable to do so because of local conditions and Kurdish terrorism.

It was understood that the military exemption tax should not be levied on villages which had been plundered, and orders were, I am told, issued by the Porte to that effect. In spite of this the tax is exacted from many villages which were plundered in 1895–96, to say nothing of those which have lost heavily at the hands of the Kurds during the current year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 11.

Memorandum.

LE Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Bitlis, interpellé à propos des faits mentionnés dans la notice de l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique en date du 25 Octobre dernier relative à la situation à Guendj et à Akhlat, répond que les Arméniens qui avaient embrassé l'Islamisme lors des désordres survenus dans ces parages, et qui sont déjà revenus à leur ancienne croyance, exercent leur culte avec une pleine et entière liberté sans qu'ils soient l'objet d'aucune vexation de la part des Kurdes. Seulement les habitants du village de Zir composé de vingt-cinq à trente familles se refusent à se convertir de nouveau au Christianisme.

Les vingt-huit animaux qui avait été enlevés du village de Djemaleddin et dont les trois souls avaient été achetés avec les fonds de secours ont été déjà découverts et restitués à leurs propriétaires. Outre les 300 piastres, que ceux-ci ont données de leur

propre gré aux individus qui avaient désigné les localités où les dits animaux se trouvaient, ils n'ont payé à personne aucune autre somme.

Des poursuites judiciaires ont été également intentées contre les individus qui avaient volé des animaux appartenant aux habitants du village de Zaghki et dont les dix-huit avaient été acquis au moyen de subsides.

Le Vali ajoute que les autorités Impériales se conforment strictement lors de la perception de la taxe d'exonération militaire aux décisions prises à ce sujet par la Sublime Porte.

Le 4 Janvier, 1898.

No. 12.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 10.)

(No. 8.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 10, 1898, 7·15 P.M.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, with reference to my despatch No. 794 of the 2nd ultimo, that I received to-day the following telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van :—

"The officials assert that they know nothing of any intention to concentrate troops in the spring, and I can see no indications here of an intended aggression on the part of Russia.

"2,000 quilts, 10,000 suits of clothes, and 10,000 pairs of socks have been ordered here for the hospitals."

No. 13.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 15).

(No. 15.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 15, 1898, 6·20 P.M.

DURING his audience yesterday, M. Zinoview asked that the Hamidie cavalry might be withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the Russian frontier.

The Sultan appears to have been much disturbed at this demand

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No. 14.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 15, 1898.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 819 of the 15th ultimo, and I approve of the action which you propose to take, in conjunction with your Italian and French colleagues, with a view to obtain the pardon of the Armenian girl convicted of distributing letters, addressed by the Hintchagist Committee, to the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 15.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 15, 1898.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 9 of the 6th instant relative to the increase of distress in the Vilayet of Kharput in consequence of the excessive taxation, and I approve your proposal to call the attention of the Turkish Government to the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 16.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 17.)

(No. 15.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 7, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a letter which I have received from the Central Committee of the Hintchagist party in London, requesting my intervention on behalf of the Armenians in Cilicia.

I am informed that some of my colleagues have received similar communications.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 16.

The Central Committee of the Hintchagist Party to Sir P. Currie.

Excellence, *Londres, le 18 Décembre*, 1897.

LE Comité Central du parti Hentchakiste a l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence les faits suivants

L'assemblée générale du parti, réunie l'année passée à Londres, a remplacé l'ancien Comité Central par un nouveau Comité dont tous les membres ont été exclusivement pris parmi les Arméniens de l'Empire Ottoman.

La nouvelle Direction prenant en considération les conseils du Patriarcat Arménien de Constantinople, communiqués à deux reprises par des envoyés spéciaux, a patiemment attendu les résultats de l'intervention des Puissances en faveur des réformes. Le Comité Central a cru cependant de son devoir de faciliter aux Arméniens les moyens de la défense personnelle. Bien armés, bien protégés par les autorités locales, les Musulmans peuvent à tout moment massacrer les Chrétiens; la triste expérience de ces dernières trois années ne laisse aucun doute sur la situation précaire des Arméniens en Turquie. Cependant, le Gouvernement Ottoman, qui tolère aux Musulmans l'exercice des armes, impute aux Arméniens comme une action criminelle jusqu'à l'idée même de la défense personnelle. Les arrestations qui se poursuivent en Cilicie depuis trois mois confirment pleinement cette triste vérité.

Privés du droit de la défense par les armes les Arméniens de la Cilicie sont exposés, malgré leur bravoure, au péril de massacre. Il y a quelques mois, la ville de Hadjine ne fut sauvée que par l'intervention du Gouvernement Français, averti à temps des projets criminels de autorités Ottomanes de la Cilicie. Actuellement la satisfaction donnée au Gouvernement Autrichien dans l'affaire de M. Brazzofolli a créé aux Arméniens de la Cilicie une situation des plus dangereuses. Blessés dans leur amour-propre national, mais impuissants contre les Européens, les Islams du pays se vengent sur les Arméniens de mystifications subies par leur Gouvernement à Mersine. Les cris menaçants de massacre se font déjà entendre et comme prélude d'une mise en action des menaces, quatre Arméniens ont été massacrés sur la route de Hadjine.

Excellence, le Comité Central du parti Hentchakiste s'étant conformé aux avis du Gouvernement Français, annoncés du haut de la tribune par M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, et aux conseils amicaux du Patriarcat Arménien, dont les relations avec les Représentants des Grandes Puissances à Constantinople sont bien connues, s'est abstenu pendant une longue période de quatorze mois de toute agitation pouvant entraver l'action des Puissances en faveur des réformes en Turquie; en même temps, dans le "Mard," l'organe officiel du parti, nous avons exhorté tous les Arméniens à la modération et à la patience. Nous croyons donc avoir le droit de prier votre Excellence de vouloir bien intervenir en faveur des Arméniens de la Cilicie tant pour ceux qui sont emprisonnés que pour ceux molestés par les autorités locales et menacés de massacres.

Nous aimons à espérer, Excellence, avec tous les Arméniens, que l'exécution à bref délai des réformes dans l'Empire Ottoman, rendra inutile les précautions individuelles pour la défense personnelle.

Nous vous prions, &c
(Pour le Comité Central du parti Hentchakiste),
(Signé) F. STEPANIAN.
ARTIN BOGHOSSIAN

No. 17.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 17.)

(No. 16.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 625 of the 14th September last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting the extension of the Smyrna–Cassaba Railway to Afioun-Kara-Hissar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Smyrna, January 3, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 90 of the 10th September, 1897, on the subject of the prolongation of the Smyrna–Kassaba Railway to Ushak, I have now the honour to report that the extension of the line from the latter place to Afioun-Kara-Hissar has been completed and opened to traffic.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 18.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 17.)

(No. 19.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that according to a telegram received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, three Armenian revolutionists were shot near that town on the 9th instant. It appears that they were armed and actively resisted the gendarmes; but Captain Elliot adds that there is no danger to the public peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 19.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 17.)

(No. 20.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 721 of the 26th October, respecting the orders recently issued in the Vilayets of Diarbekir and Kharput as to the treatment of Armenians, I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, containing a translation of the telegram addressed by the Sultan's First Secretary to the Valis of the various provinces of the Empire on this subject, and reporting the arrest and imprisonment of all Armenians returning to their homes from abroad.

I have instructed Mr. Block to bring this latter point to the notice of the Sublime Porte, and am also communicating with the Patriarchate on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Trebizond, January 2, 1898.*

WHILE complications with Greece lasted, the Armenians were left more or less in peace. It was even hoped that they would at last be allowed to enjoy in the future ordinary equity as well as humane treatment. Such, unhappily, is not the case, mainly because the Palace, it would seem, is in this once more exercising its baneful influence.

Signs of a reactionary policy have not been wanting ever since the beginning of autumn. Not the least of the more important evidence available is, perhaps, Tahsin Bey's Circular, received by the Vali in the middle of last September, which his Excellency, fearing the mischief it may do, kept in the greatest secrecy from all, even from his most intimate friends. Inclosed is a translation of it given in the last number of the French bi-monthly periodical issued in Paris, called "Œuvres des Ecoles d'Orient." I do not know how Père Charmetant obtained a copy of the original, but that this champion of the Armenian cause has given a true translation of it I am in a position to affirm with certitude. It is, and it may be, regarded as genuine, however illogical its contents may be, and whatever doubts its wording may cast on the truthfulness and impartiality of Consular officers.

Since then a series of other orders have been received by the Vali with respect to Armenians and Armenian affairs. There was one not to treat political suspects with clemency out of regard for Consuls; there was another to afford the Mission of the "New York Herald" every assistance; and there was a third interdicting the interior more stringently than ever to all foreigners not provided with the special permission of the Central Government.

The worst of these mostly puerile instructions is unquestionably the one debarring the return of Armenian refugees from abroad. Such only are admitted as have by some means or other succeeded in obtaining passports duly *visé*, or, being known locally, can give bail. The rest are, as a consequence, filling up the prisons, and this at the expense of a State which can ill-afford bread to its own gendarmes. Eight of them—that is six at Samsoun and two at Trebizond—are, with reason I believe, suspected, but most, if not all, the others are doubtless innocent. To keep these poor inoffensive people shut up in the cold, damp gaols of this coast, with barely any food and covering in the depth of this exceptionally severe winter, simply because they tried to get back to their homes, is, to say the least, cruel! I would, therefore, beg leave to draw the particular attention of the Embassy to the matter, especially so as Cadri Bey's telegrams on the subject, both to the Palace and to the Porte, have been left unanswered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 19.

Extracts from the "Œuvres des Ecoles d'Orient" of November–December 1897.

Traduction du Télégramme Circulaire adressé aux Gouverneurs-Généraux des Provinces de l'Empire Ottoman par son Excellence Tahsin Bey, Premier Secrétaire du Sultan, le 1er (13) Septembre, 1897.

* * * * * *

"ON a appris que des ordres ont été donnés aux Consuls pour procéder à une enquête sur le nombre des Arméniens en Anatolie, sur leur enfants restés dans la misère, sur ceux qui se sont convertis à l'Islamisme, sur les femmes gardées dans les maisons des Musulmans, sur l'état de pauvreté des Arméniens, et celle de leurs familles, et sur ceux qui ont été condamnés.

"Or, comme il est connu que ce sont les Arméniens eux-mêmes qui ont organisé et provoqué les troubles, et comme leur agression n'était pas prévue, il est indubitable que des femmes et des enfants Musulmans sont restés dans leurs mains; par contre, il est aussi indubitable que ni femmes ni enfants Arméniens n'ont pu demeurer en la possession des Musulmans.

"Malgré tout cela, on cherche à faire sans cesse des enquêtes dans le but de montrer comme des victimes les Arméniens, et comme ces tentatives sont préjudiciables au Gouvernement Impérial, il en résulte que dès que vous saurez que les Consuls agissent ainsi vous devez, pour prévenir l'effet de ces mensonges et de ces calomnies, qui peuvent produire un grand nombre de préjudices au Gouvernement, prendre immédiatement les mesures nécessaires pour les empêcher et nous en avertir en même temps, ainsi que l'exige le devoir de dévouement et de fidélité.

"Si vous agissez autrement, vous serez responsable et considéré comme traître du Gouvernement et à l'Islam.

"Il est également nécessaire que vous mettiez en évidence les actes de ravages et d'agression des Arméniens qui résulteront de l'enquête et des procédures des Consuls.

"C'est donc par l'ordre de Sa Majesté le Sultan que le Premier Secrétaire du Palais vous fait savoir par son télégramme du 1er Septembre, 1313, le devoir d'apporter entièrement dans ce sens tout le soin nécessaire; par conséquent, conformément à l'Iradé Impérial vous devez employer dans ce but tout l'empressement et toutes les mesures nécessaires."

* * * * * *

Ce qui nous révolte le plus dans ce document c'est qu'on a le courage de nier qu'il ait eu des conversions forcées et que des femmes, des jeunes vierges, des enfants Arméniens soient en la possession des Turcs, quand tout le monde sait, à Constantinople, que depuis longtemps le Patriarcat Arménien de Koum-Kapou possède une longue liste, qui est bien loin d'être complète, de ces malheureux et malheureuses pour lesquels il demande, mais en vain, la liberté pour les convertir de force à revenir à leur foi Chrétienne et pour les séquestrées de sortir enfin des harems, où elles sont enfermées. Nous avons nous-mêmes entre nos mains une liste partielle, dressée dans une dizaine de districts, de ces pauvres Arméniens convertis par force et d'Arméniennes séquestrées, et que nous publierons, s'il y a lieu, pour montrer à l'opinion ce que valent les affirmations officielles des Turcs.

No. 20.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 17.)

(No. 22.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 12, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, respecting the arrest, through the French Consulate-General there, of one Ali Bey, who was a passenger on board a steamer of the Messageries Maritimes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Consul-General Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 80.)
Sir, *Beirout, December* 29, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on the arrival of the Messageries mail-steamer from Constantinople on the 27th instant, the Vali of Beirout, acting upon instructions from the Porte, demanded through the French Consul-General the surrender of an Ottoman passenger named Ali Bey, sub-Director of the Statistical Department at Constantinople, who had taken his passage for Marseilles.

The captain of the ship having refused to accede to the demands of the local authorities, the French Consul-General referred the matter to Constantinople and received yesterday afternoon instructions from the French Ambassador to deliver the man over to the Vali. He accordingly went on board accompanied by the Political Director of the vilayet, and attended personally to the formalities.

On landing, Ali Bey was conveyed to the Serai and after being cross-examined by the Vali, he was placed under arrest in the military barracks.

He is stated to be a member of the Young Turkey party, who was escaping to France with the intention of starting a journal in that country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 21.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 17.)

(No. 23.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 13, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 9 of the 6th January respecting the financial situation in the Kharput Vilayet, I have the honour to report that I have received a further telegram from Mr. Fontana confirming his previous statements as to the exactions of the tax collectors.

At Shintil, a village of sixty houses, all of which have been plundered, arrears of taxes for thirteen years are being pressed for to the amount of 35,000 piastres, while at Mounik, another of the plundered villages, where forty houses have been burnt, Mr. Fontana reports having himself seen an officer and three soldiers demanding arrears to the amount of 7,000 piastres. Similar complaints have reached him from other villages, the tax collectors, in some cases going so far in their exactions as to seize the bedding of destitute people.

I have instructed Mr. Block to bring these particulars to the notice of the Grand Vizier, and to urge that orders may be sent to put a stop to these extortions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 22.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 17.)

(No. 17.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 17, 1898, 8·15 P.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis telegraphed to me to-day as follows:—

"The Vali informs me that the Sairt Court has condemned to death the six men who were arrested for the murder of Yusuf Yunan, the relief agent."

No. 23.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 26.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 14, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, respecting the spoliation by tax-collectors of Armenian widows, and the action taken by him in bringing such cases to the notice of the Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 56.)
Sir, *Kharput, December* 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that three Armenian widows from the Uch Bey Mahallé, of Chemish-Gheuk came the other day to Kharput and brought me a letter signed by some eighteen other widows, complaining of the grievous extortion to which they were all subjected by the local tax-collectors, whose names, it seems, are Khalil Effendi and Garabet.

The following statements were made to me by the three women in question, Mariam Akhighian, Surpuhy Akhighian, and Mariam Baghighian.

Mariam Akhighian affirmed that she lived alone with her married daughter (whose husband had lost all during the disturbances, and was now working at Kharput), and that they depended mainly upon a cow belonging to them for their support. The tax-collectors had driven off the cow, taken away the daughter's bed and "kazan," or principal cooking utensil, and refused to give receipts therefore; and they continued to pester for arrears of taxes claimed, and for bedel-i-askeri, which is only leviable upon males. Mariam had petitioned the Kaïmakam for the return of the cow, but without result.

Surpuhy stated that her husband had been killed during the massacres leaving her with two young children to support. The family subsisted chiefly upon the milk yielded by their one cow which, through fear of the tax-collectors, the mother had been forced to conceal in a neighbour's shed. The collectors broke recently into Surpuhy's house after dark, and robbed her of a carpet, cushion, and kazan, and they are now clamouring and searching for the cow. She has paid 30 piastres this year for taxes, and owes 30 piastres more—one-fifth of the value of the furniture taken from her by force.

Mariam Baghighian said that she is a widow with one son, aged fourteen, who gains his own and his mother's livelihood by collecting and bringing firewood to town on the donkey belonging to them. The lad was imprisoned for taxes demanded, and his mother could only obtain his release upon paying 40 piastres. The collectors then twice confiscated her donkey, which she managed to recover by scraping together and paying into their hands upon the first occasion 15 piastres, and on the second 20 piastres. They are now threatening to take away the animal again unless further sums are quickly forthcoming.

These poor women were clean and decent in appearance, and little doubt remained in my mind as to the truth of their assertions. I therefore suggested to them to at once give petitions to the Vali, whom I called upon a few hours later and furnished with the details above set forth. Raouf Bey promised to provide the widows with a takrir to the Kaïmakam of Chemish-Ghesek, ordering that the property taken from them should be restored, and that they should not, henceforth, be harassed for taxes; and his promise has since been fulfilled.

An employé at the Government Konak informed me that the villagers' beds, consisting in a mattress and quilt which are rolled up during the day, are often seized and brought by the tax-collectors to the said Konak. A few days ago the Vali happened to notice a quilt in the hands of a collector there, and upon ascertaining that it had been taken for taxes, ordered it to be returned to its owner.

It is useless, I fear, to expect the local authorities to definitely stop, or even mitigate the extortion to which the poorer Armenian villagers are subjected, pending the cessation of the continual and peremptory demands for money made upon this vilayet by the Palace and the Porte. The term "demands," in this instance, may be considered as euphemistic for grave extortion and spoliation practised by the Central Government upon the poorest section—for the greater part Christian—of the population of Maamouret-ul-Aziz, through the channel of the Kharput authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 24.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 28.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 14, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, respecting the financial condition of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Sivas, January* 1, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to report that, recently in this vilayet, increased activity has been displayed in the collection of taxes, presumably owing to the telegraphic instructions from Constantinople, directing all money collected to be sent thither weekly; the payment of officials to remain in abeyance (my despatch No. 6 of the 14th December last).

On the 27th ultimo several Armenian Mukhtars of villages in this sanjak, *i.e.*, Kangal, Magharma, Bozarmut, Maujulik, and others, were brought in here to show their seals; and to answer various inquiries as to whether various Armenians in their villages, who were in debt to the Agricultural Bank, could pay their debts or not. The Government have made a list of those who appear solvent.

From Kangal I hear that an officer and fifteen soldiers quartered in the village have been told that they can receive their pay direct from the villagers, in order to save the trouble of sending the money in here and back to Kangal. I saw the Vali and drew his attention to this matter; he informed me that the course laid down in the scheme of reforms had not been departed from, and that only "percepteurs" (tchsildars) had been employed. However, he would write and make inquiries, and prevent the direct payment of the soldiers in this manner.

It is a fact that the tchsildars are often sent, with a police officer and some zaptiehs, or with some zaptiehs only, to accompany them and assist in refractory cases.

This is practically very much as if the tchsildars were not there.

When I told an Armenian Mukhtar that I should ask the Vali to employ only tchsildars, he said that the difference between tchsildars and zaptiehs would be but slight. I hear, however, from other sources, that tchsildars are a considerable improvement, as their methods are not quite so rough as those of zaptiehs. Generally speaking, the Vali appears to be endeavouring to carry out properly the scheme of reforms, and a number of tchsildars have been sent out lately.

In the course of the Vali's new-year visit of congratulation, he was good enough to give me the following resumé of expenditure in this vilayet, in reply to some remark of mine that it was rumoured that a German financial inspector was to be appointed to each vilayet:—

For nine months, from the 1st March to the 1st December, 1897, a sum total of £ T. 250,000 had been collected from various taxes.

Of this, £ T. 52,000 had been allotted to troops of the 4th Army Corps.
£ T. 52,000 had been sent to Constantinople.
£ T. 32,000 to Constantinople as military subscription (Iané-i-askerie).
£ T. 34,000 for Russian War Indemnity.

The remaining £ T. 80,000 was retained here for payment of officials and for local purposes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL.

No. 25.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 15, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting the steps he has taken since his return to his post for the settlement of the outstanding cases.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 25.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Adana, January* 1, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have been occupied lately with the following cases with good effect:—

1. *Armenian Political Prisoners.*

Your Excellency will remember my having reported many arrests of Armenians in this vilayet on suspicion cast through the opening of letters from abroad by the Government. Of these, I have succeeded in causing the liberation of all but twenty-seven, of whom some nine more are promised their liberty in the course of the next few days. The remainder are to be brought to trial at once, as I represented that the three months which they have already passed in confinement is already excessive without a decision of their case.

2. *Hellene Subject, M. Veltakys.*

This gentleman had passed nearly two months confined to his house, through fear of further imprisonment, awaiting my return. I visited the Acting Mutessarif the day of my arrival, and arranged that M. Veltakys might attend to his business unmolested pending the final settlement of his case. This is now being attended to, and I have spared no trouble to visit all officials concerned in order to secure their friendly action for a favourable solution.

3. *Cotton Weaving at Hadjin.*

The Rev. J. C. Martin reported to me that some opposition had been shown to the completion of two buildings—one in Hadjin, the other in Shahr—which he destined to our relief operations for weaving purposes. I visited Shakir Pasha, Acting Wali, and arranged with him that every facility should be given to this work by the local officials, he expressing himself grateful for our philanthropic labours in saving the population from starvation.

4. *Repairs to Roads at Hamidieh.*

When I was at Hamidieh last spring there were many complaints made to me of the state of the road through that town which impeded all traffic, causing great loss to the inhabitants. The Kaimakam, even, asked me to intercede, so that some of the taxes levied for the purpose might be devoted to road repairs, instead of being transmitted entirely to Constantinople. I am glad to report that this was done, and traffic will thereby be greatly increased this winter.

In accordance with your Excellency's telegraphic authority, I shall start at once on a tour, visiting Osmanié and the Payas neighbourhood, also Sis and Kara-Bazar. After ascertaining the most pressing needs, I shall distribute relief to the most destitute.

The new Mutessarif of Mersina arrived there on Thursday last. We have exchanged visits. He appears to be an enlightened man, who gave general satisfaction as Kaimakam of Tarsovo, near Mersina, a few years ago.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 26.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 17, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a list of the arrests of Armenians on political and other charges according to the reports which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular Representatives in Asia Minor since March last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Memorandum.

ON the 27th March, 1897, Vice-Consul Massy reported that only four political prisoners (Armenians) remained in custody in the vilayet.

On the 25th May, Consul Barnham reported the arrest of twenty Armenians in connection with the visit of Hunchag agent.

On the 28th June, Vice-Consul Massy reports that the cases of imprisoned Armenians have increased very much.

On the 17th September, Vice-Consul Massy forwarded a list of twelve Armenians in prison at Adana, arrested since the amnesty (there would seem to be twenty-six in all. See Sublime Porte's Notice of the 9th January, 1898).

On the 16th October, Mr. Barnham reported the arrest of seven or eight Armenians at Alexandretta, and some at Messina.

On the 29th October, Mr. Barnham reported that, at least, thirty Armenians remained in prison on recent political suspicion.

On the 30th October, Vice-Consul Massy reported that in all sixty political arrests had been made during the month.

In July, Consul Shipley reported the arrest of seven Armenians for murder, of whom three were committed for trial.

In March 1897, Vice-Consul Monahan reported in Bitlis one political criminal, and in Mush four still in confinement.

At the same date in Sivas, twenty-eight political prisoners, according to Armenians.

On the 3rd April, 1897, Vice-Consul Monahan reported ten Armenians arrested in the Caza of Akhlat.

On the 6th April the number in Bitlis prison was eighteen.

In October 1897 Captain Elliot reported numbers of arrests at Van.

During October Vice-Consul Crow reported about 100 Armenians arrested in Akhlat and Bitlis, of whom forty-six were released (20th December, 1897), seven being condemned.

On the 4th December Armenians proceeding to Hans were arrested and ordered to leave the country. (Mr. D. Hay, 31st December, 1897.)

Samsoun and Trebizond.—Armenian refugees returning from abroad are arrested. Mr. Longworth mentions six at the former and two at the latter place who are suspected with reason of revolutionary practices, but most of the others (no figure given) are said to be innocent.

Baulanik.—Twenty-eight arrested on charge of harbouring revolutionists. (Mr. Crow, 13th January, 1898.)

Zeitoun.—Arrests of Armenians have occurred, amongst them being a certain Nazaret Chaush.

No. 27.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 37.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 17, 1898.*

IN a telegram dated the 14th instant, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis reported the disappearance from that town of two prominent evil-doers—the Mufti having died and the Mutessarif being transferred to the Vilayet of Aleppo.

Mr. Crow added that four Turks had been arrested there the previous day for attempted murder of an Inspector of Police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 28.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 38. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 19, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 22 of the 13th January, reporting the arrest of a Turkish subject named Ali Bey on board a French Messageries steamer in Beirout Harbour, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a further despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting the sequel of the incident.

I learn from the French Embassy here that on receiving from M. Souhart, the French Consul-General, an inquiry whether he should comply with the Vali's request for the surrender of Ali Bey, M. de la Boulinière, the French Chargé d'Affaires, directed him on no account to allow the arrest, but that meanwhile instructions had been received at Beirout direct from Paris to the effect that the arrest might be made provided the Turkish authorities could show in proper legal form that Ali Bey was accused of offences at common law.

The Vali thereupon wrote a letter to M. Souhart, stating that Ali Bey was accused of such and such crimes, and the arrest was allowed to take place.

The French Chargé d'Affaires, it appears, was exceedingly annoyed at the way in which M. Souhart had carried out his instructions, there having been no preliminary inquiry or "mandat d'arrêt," and I learn that the French Embassy will insist that Ali Bey be tried at Beirout in open Court on the specific charges mentioned in the Vali's letter, and if he is acquitted, a result of which there can, according to them, be no doubt, they will demand his immediate release.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 28.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

No. 2. Confidential.)
Sir, *Beirout, January 5, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 80 of the 29th December reporting the delivery to the Turkish authorities by the French Consul-General of a certain Ali Bey, passenger on board a Messagerie Mail steamer, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, on the successful issue of the incident being reported by the Vali to the Porte, his action was highly approved, and Michel Effendi Eddé, the Political-Director, who was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the understanding, was raised to the rank of Rethny Oula Senfsany (first grade, second-class).

On the following day it was reported that the Imtiaz Gold and Silver Medal had been conferred on M. Souhart, and the Chefakat, second-class, on Mdme. Souhart.

The Consul-General and the members of his staff are very reticent on the subject of these decorations, but I have learnt on good authority that the report is well founded,

and that they were actually conferred in return for services rendered over the incident.

Michel Effendi Eddé is a Maronite, and is besides under an especial obligation to the French, having recently obtained, through M. Souhart, the decoration of Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur.

The existence of this state of things in the Serai is sufficient to account for the unnecessary noise created over a question of trivial importance.

M. Souhart was lately raised to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary, and will be shortly transferred to a Legation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 29.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 43.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 20, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, respecting the arrival there of the Vali, and the general state of affairs in the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Jeddah, January 1, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that his Excellency the Vali arrived here from Mecca on the 2nd instant, and will probably remain till just before the beginning of Ramazan on the 23rd instant. General Shukri Pasha and other officers accompanied his Excellency.

Several persons have just arrived here from Medina, and report the road to be fairly safe, but there were again some disturbances among the Bedouins in the neighbourhood of that city about a fortnight or three weeks ago.

The Grand Sherif is not as yet prepared to make any move out of Mecca, but his agents (the Bedouins) are displaying more activity in this neighbourhood, and lately had the misfortune to kill a Bedouin whom they were attempting to arrest. How little his Highness is trusted may be judged from an anecdote now current here that on his summoning the Sheikh of a large tribe near Medina to come to Mecca, the latter replied that though he could not go to Mecca, he would be glad to meet his Highness in the Wadi Fatima—this being a deserted spot, open on all sides for miles round.

Though it would appear that no result has been forthcoming from the meeting of the Sheikhs with the Grand Sherif (referred to in my despatch No. 106 of the 30th November), the Hedjaz appears to be more settled and contented than was the case a month or two ago, as supplies have been received, and the rainfall, except at Medina, has been plentiful everywhere; the Haj season is also drawing nigh.

Still some discontent has been expressed at Yembo, where it was alleged that Government taxes had been levied on the Bedouin's supplies, and in this town complaints are already being raised that the "tanzifat" tax is increased.

As, however, the pilgrimage now and for several succeeding years recedes into the cool season, there will be fewer and fewer pilgrims travelling by night when they are most exposed to raids.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 30.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 45.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 20, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 699 of the 14th October last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting the circumstances attending the deposition of the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch by the Synod of Bishops. I learn that the Patriarch has made an appeal to the Œcumenical Patriarch to use his influence with the Sultan to prevent the decision of the Synod being confirmed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 30.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Damascus, January 10, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 52 of the 1st October last, reporting on the movement then in progress throughout the Greek Orthodox community here against their Patriarch, Mgr. Spiridon, their object being to bring about his deposition, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that a meeting was held here on the 6th instant of eight (out of a total number of fourteen) of the Bishops of this, the Antioch, See, for the purpose of discussing the propriety of this step. After a full examination of various grave charges brought against the Patriarch, of which a long list made out by the community had been laid before them, the Bishops decided unanimously that he should be deposed, and pending the ratification of this decision by the Sultan they communicated it in writing to the Vali, with a request that it might be forwarded to Constantinople. At the same time they deputed one of their number, Mgr. Nicodemos, Bishop of Akkar, and five members of the community, to take a copy of their Resolution to the Convent of Seidnaya (near Damascus), where the Patriarch is now staying, and communicate it to him in case he should refuse to resign, he being allowed the option of taking the latter course. Mgr. Spiridon refused, it appears, to resign, and has, in consequence, been provisionally deposed, pending the receipt of an Iradé from Constantinople. I should have stated that the Patriarch had previously been invited by the Bishops to come to Damascus and appear before the Synod in order to answer the charges brought against him, but he refused to do so, although the Vali urged him privately to comply. Of the six Bishops who were neither present nor represented at the Synod, two, viz., those of Zahleh and Hasbeya, are more or less implicated in the charges brought against the Patriarch, and were therefore not invited to be present; one, the Bishop of Aleppo, pleaded illness, and refused to come; two more, Bishops *in partibus*, residing in Damascus, were not entitled to a summons because they have no dioceses, while the Bishopric of Erzeroum—making the fourteenth—is at present vacant.

Mgr. Germanos, Bishop of Tarsus has been elected to take over temporary charge of the Patriarchate.

The matter has, as might be expected, excited the very greatest interest here, and, indeed, forms the chief topic of conversation among all classes of the Christian population. Should I learn further details in connection with this incident which are likely to prove of interest to your Excellency, I shall not fail to communicate them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

P.S.—I hear that M. Bélaiew, my Russian colleague, was with the ex-Patriarch at the Seidnaya Convent at the very time when the Resolution of the Synod was communicated to him, but I am uninformed as to the object of his visit.

W. S. R.

No. 31.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 46.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 20, 1898.*

AS I had the honour to inform your Lordship in my despatch No. 23 of the 13th instant, I instructed Mr. Block to make representations to the Grand Vizier respecting the extortion of arrears of taxes from the villagers in the plundered districts of the Vilayet of Kharput. I am glad to be able to state that his Highness immediately telegraphed to the Vali instructing him not to press for payment in the case of those who are too indigent to meet the tax-collectors' demands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 32.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 47.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 21, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the resignation of the police of that locality owing to the non-payment of their salaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 32.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Kharput, January 5, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the members of the police force at Kharput, enrolled under the supervision of Marshal Shakir Pasha during his stay here, tendered their resignation some few days ago, owing to the fact of their having received no pay up to that time. They were informed that the Secretary-General of the vilayet had twice written to the Porte for instructions specifying what "Takhsissat" or local revenue appropriation should be assigned for the payment of their salary, but that no answer had so far been received; and they were advised to wait until a further application had been made and responded to.

It is difficult to form a conjecture, in face of the present financial condition of the vilayet, as to the particular source from which such an appropriation is to be derived.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 33.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 49.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 24, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received form Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, respecting the plundering which has been committed there by Kurds and officers of the Hamidieh cavalry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 36.)

Bitlis, December 28, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE received the following information from Boulanek :—

The Hamidieh Majors, Tajdin and Beshar, accompanied by their servants, attacked the village of Teghud on the night of the 15th November, plundering three dwellings and carrying off 55 animals. Three soldiers were in the village for its protection, but gave no assistance.

On the 16th November the same men attacked Vodenchur and carried off 32 animals.

In the same week they attacked Yunjalow and took 32 animals, where soldiers who were protecting the village killed one of the Kurds. Beshar then threatened to burn down the village, but the Kaimakam of Gop sent 15 soldiers to protect it.

Beshar and Tajdin have recently returned from Erzingian, whither they were summoned by Zekki Pasha.

During the month of November they also attacked Gop, the centre of the Boulanek Government. The attack was at night, and lasted for three hours. They took 150 sheep and 12 buffaloes. The Kaimakam had not enough gendarmes to protect the village and, on the peasants appealing to him, replied that whenever he reports these matters to the Central authorities he was censured, and as he had not a sufficient force at hand he could do nothing himself. He sent them to Behiadin Pasha at Melasgird, but there has been no redress.

Fatullah Bey, a Hamidieh officer at Malasgird, recalled Mohamed Said, the Kurd who had wounded a lieutenant in the summer and had fled to Khizan, and extracted 180 liras from him. These he gave as compensation to the wounded lieutenant, telling him he was to fish in troubled water between Kurds and Armenians.

The appropriation of Armenian land by Kurds continues on a large scale in the villages of Akhlat and Boulanek, where Christians cede their fields in return for [illegible] protection and give documents stating that they have parted with them for value. The villagers are glad to do this as it affords them temporary protection for their lives, but of their property, but the practice leads to the ultimate expropriation of all the Christian families.

The villagers of Derigh, in Boulanek, have come to Bitlis to complain of the extortion and robbery practised by Reza Agha, who claims 100 liras from the village for no reason. They propose to telegraph to Constantinople if they get no protection or redress they must leave their homes if Reza Agha is not checked.

In October, 1896, the village of Hersonk, in Akhlat, 21 more relief oxen were stolen, 14 by the Hamidieh Suleiman Agha (Hassananli), and 7 by a servant of Hussein Pasha Hydenanli). The total number of Akhlat oxen now in Kurdish hands is 143, out of 166 granted.

I learn from Khizan that in the middle of November the servants of Sheikh Said Ali attacked three Armenian villages in the Shinetsor Valley (Khageo, Mamdan, and Broshin), and plundered three churches.

In the same week the Sheikh's people attacked Kharkhos, also in the Shinetsor Valley, wounding the Armenian Colonel Mudiri, Ohannes Agha, a Member of the Council of Administration of Khizan, and appointed under the Reforms, and taking four sheep.

In the same week Barkhar in the same locality was attacked by the same Kurds, who killed one Armenian, and wounded another.

Diarul Anabat, in Khizan, were also attacked by the same Kurds, and lost thirty-one sheep.

The Kaimakam of Khizan has been informed of these events, but nothing has been done.

The headmen of ten Armenian villages have been sent by Sheikh Said Ali to the Vali to complain of the Kaimakam of Khizan, and ask for his removal. They have so far been unsuccessful in their attempt, and fear to return to Khizan without having obtained his dismissal.

The plundering of caravans and individuals still continues on the Saird Road near Bitlis, at the same spot where I witnessed an attack on the 20th November last. Complaints of these disorders to the Vali are frequent, but his Excellency refuses to entertain them, and states that the reports are mere fabrications of the disaffected townsfolk of Bitlis, who are trying to injure his credit.

It was suggested at the Council of Administration that the complainants were at least entitled to legal remedies in the event of their being able to prove their charges, and it was proposed to refer their complaints to the Judical authorities for the usual investigation. The Vali, however, put his veto on this proposal, saying that the reports were false, and that it was giving unnecessary trouble, and further inquiry into these matters has therefore been suppressed.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

No. 34.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 27, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas respecting disturbances which have recently taken place at Yarhissar.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 17.)

Sir, *Sivas, January* 12, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on the 8th instant the Vali here received intelligence by telegraph from Deliktash that a disturbance had occurred at Yarhissar, a village east of Manjulik, between Circassians and Armenians. The village is a mixed one of Circassians and Armenians, constituted under the following circumstances :—

Some two months after the massacres, the Armenians owed a debt to a local Circassian Bey of £T. 250.

Halil Bey, the Vali of Sivas, at the time suggested that several houses in Yarhissar should be occupied by Circassians in payment of the debt.

This was done, four houses being occupied at first with the fields belonging thereto, and subsequently seven houses were so occupied.

The present Vali, knowing that it was rather difficult for a mixed village of Circassians and Armenians to live together in peace, has been making arrangements for the removal of the Circassians to Azizie, a neighbouring settlement of that race.

The struggle commenced about a debt of a mejidie, which an Armenian owed to a Circassian.

Blows followed; with the result that one Armenian was killed and two wounded.

One Circassian was also wounded by a revolver bullet in the shoulder.

A Circassian woman, apparently a spectator, was knocked on the head, but not seriously injured.

The Vali here, immediately on receipt of the news, dispatched a senior officer ("tabur aghasi") and some zaptiehs to the village, which is seventeen hours from here.

On his return the officer was sent over to the Consulate; so that I could learn the details from him personally.

Three Circassian prisoners have been brought and lodged in the prison here.

No Armenian prisoners were made.

The Armenians wounded are likely to recover.

Two zaptiehs have been left in the village to keep order.

When at Yarhissar, the officer took occasion to settle the terms under which the Circassians were to leave.

The original debt of £T. 250 is to be paid, with the addition of £T. 140 for

improvements which the Circassians have made; making a total of about £ T. 400, which the Armenians will have to pay.

The Circassians are to leave early in March, when the weather becomes more suitable.

This outbreak is, I believe, quite isolated, and is owing to the peculiar constitution of the village.

I have, however, warned the Vali that, although isolated, such disturbances may spread unless strong action is taken.

His action has been praiseworthy and energetic.

I might add that up to the date of writing I have not been able to see an Armenian villager from Yarhissar; but I believe the above is substantially correct, and that the general order and quietness will not be further disturbed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL.

No. 35.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 55.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 27, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, reporting his action in preventing the sale of the property of Armenians to meet the demands of the tax collectors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Sivas, January 13, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that recently some instances of selling oxen and flour of Armenian villagers for the payment of taxes have been brought to my notice.

This being in contravention of the Scheme of Reforms Act 31, I saw the Vali on the subject.

He assured me that the tahsildars knew the orders on the subject, and ended by saying that if he knew the names of the tahsildars who acted thus, he would "break their heads."

On returning home, I forwarded to his Excellency a list giving the names of those tahsildars against whom I had heard complaints. He at once wrote the necessary orders for the restoration of the animals, and the prevention of such acts in future.

I also brought to notice the employment of zaptiehs with the tahsildars (referred to in my despatch No. 12), and the necessary orders have been given to prevent this in future. I think, therefore, now that the collection of taxes may be proceeded with in the spirit as well as in the letter of the Scheme of Reforms.

I am glad to inform your Excellency that the Kaimakam of Kochkiri Kaza (living at Zara), Tahir Bey, whom I reported against in my despatch No. 6, has been dismissed, at least from this vilayet, and sent to the Brusa Vilayet. The Vali is also pleased at this result.

I may mention that there are constantly rumours among both Turks and Christians in this town of war with Russia, which is to commence in the spring.

They can give no foundation for these rumours, but I think it as well to inform your Excellency of their existence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL

No. 36.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7, 1898.)

(No. 173.)
My Lord, *Tehran, December 31, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I have received information from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General in Tabreez of the arrival in that city of seven members of the Armenian Revolutionary Party, armed with rifles, and having two cases of cartridges with them. I telegraphed at once to Mr. Stevens instructing him to denounce them to the Governor-General, and to have their rifles and ammunition taken from them.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, to whom I communicated this information, has also sent telegraphic instructions in the same sense.

I fear that the arrival in Tabreez of these Armenian revolutionaries indicate the intention of their party to cause further troubles upon the Turco-Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 37.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 56.
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 29, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, containing observations respecting the Greek celebration of Christmas at Bethlehem.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, January 16, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 9th January of last year, in which I reported a threatened affray at Bethlehem on the eve of the Greek Christmas, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that great apprehensions were entertained that a disturbance would occur this year on the same occasion. Happily, however, the celebration of the festival passed off with perfect tranquillity.

I had the honour to mention in my despatch above referred to that the Latins had permitted the Greek procession to pass twice through the north door of the Grotto of the Nativity only on the French Consul-General promising that it would be the last time that it should occur, and that in future the Greeks should merely exercise their right of passing once whilst celebrating the Festival of the Nativity.

As the time approached for holding the festival, the authorities at Constantinople were consulted by the Mutessarif as to what course he should adopt, but the reply was evasive, being to the effect that the *status quo* should be maintained.

The French Consul-General, who had also asked for instructions from his Government, and who had reckoned on its support in his endeavours to uphold the rights of the Latins, appears to have received an answer rather to favour the Greeks, the object being to please the Russians, who were strongly backing the Greeks in their pretensions. On being pressed by the Latin clergy to keep to his promise solemnly given a year ago, the French Consul-General felt obliged to declare that they could not count upon the assistance of the French Government, and they thereupon very wisely, to prevent a scandal so derogatory to Christianity, determined to make no resistance, and the ceremony passed off quite quietly. The Acting Russian Consul-General with the whole of his staff in full uniform was present at the ceremony to give countenance and support to the Greek clergy.

The result of this incident has been once more to secure a victory for the Russians,

as their influence and prestige with the Greeks have been thereby considerably increased, but I regret to state that the French Consul-General has been a victim of these proceedings. Having staked his word officially that the Latins should be maintained in their rights, and feeling that he could not fulfil his promise, the matter seems to have weighed so heavily upon his mind that it brought on a serious illness, from which he had previously suffered, and he succumbed on the 10th instant, much regretted by all classes, with whom he was very popular.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 38.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 57.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 29, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, giving an account of the funeral of the French Consul at that place, who recently died there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, January 18, 1898.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch, in which I alluded to the death of M. Ledoulx, the French Consul-General in this city, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that his funeral took place on the 12th instant with unusual display and ceremony. Four days before his death M. Ledoulx had been raised to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary ("Ministre Plénipotentiaire en Palestine") by the Government of the French Republic, and this fact gave an opportunity to the French colony and Latin community in general of making as great a demonstration as possible at the funeral.

The procession, which was at least half a-mile in length, left the house of the deceased at 8·30 A.M., proceeded along the principal streets of Jerusalem to the Franciscan Church of St. Saviour, where the funeral service was performed, and then continued its route to the opposite end of the town, where, at noon, the remains were deposited in the church of St. Anne, in French ground ("sol Français," as stated in the funeral oration), the church in question being the property of the French Government. The German, Italian, and American Consuls and myself were the pall bearers.

The feeling that Latin interests have for some time been giving way to those of the Greek Church, and that French prestige has been losing ground whilst Russian influence has been on the increase, caused the French clerical party, supported by the Franciscan monks and the Roman Catholic community in general, to avail themselves of the death of the French Consul-General for making as great a religious demonstration and display as was possible. The funeral procession and the ceremonies connected therewith were, in consequence, the most imposing that Jerusalem has witnessed in modern times, and the effect on the general public has been great. Shops and places of business were closed, and everywhere along the route taken by the procession thousands of people of all sects collected as spectators.

In the funeral oration, which was delivered by one of the Dominican Fathers, allusion was made to the eminent qualities of the deceased as the Representative of France, and it was delicately hinted that his death was due to his excessive personal zeal for the interests of the Catholic Church, to which he devoted himself more than perhaps he need have done. In any case, the effect produced by this imposing ceremony has been such as will help to revive to a considerable extent both French and Catholic influence in this city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 39.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 62.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 2, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah respecting rumours of a movement in the Hedjaz, led by Aziz Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Jeddah, January 19, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, about three weeks ago, there were rumours of a certain Abdul Aziz Bey, said to be a nephew by marriage of His Highness the Khedive, having entered the Hedjaz for the purpose of creating sedition.

The story is now supplemented by the particulars that this Bey formerly served in the British Indian army (with the rank of Colonel [?]), but threw up his commission and left India for Egypt, and that having collected a score or so of retainers, is now "besieging," as the phrase goes, Acaba. The maximum number that I have heard stated of his forces is between fifty and sixty; but there is no reason for anticipating that he would be able to exert the least influence upon the Bedouins or induce them to espouse his cause whatever it may be. On the contrary, it may be expected that they would prefer to seek for some profit by his capture and delivery to the Ottoman authorities.

I regret that I have been unable to glean more than this very scanty information, but if a conjecture may be hazarded on the subject, it would be that this incident should be classed as one in which an ambitious and needy adventurer, dissatisfied with ill-success in distant lands, is seeking notoriety and prominence nearer home, and possibly even there is little more substance in the movement than an attempt on the part of Aziz Bey to force his personal grievances upon the notice of either the Egyptian, or Turkish, or British Government.

The affair has attracted but very slight attention in Jeddah; however, I understand that General Shukri Pasha is being dispatched to-morrow to Acaba to report on the facts, and I do not hear that any troops whatever are being moved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 40.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 65.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 3, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Alexandretta respecting the Armenians now in prison there, of whom he transmits a list.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 40.

Vice-Consul Catoni to Sir P. Currie.

Alexandretta, January 24, 1898.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 10th instant respecting the Armenians confined in the prisons of Alexandretta, I have the honour to transmit herewith a list giving the names of these individuals and the apparent cause of their detention. I am told that their case is now under examination before the proper quarters at Aleppo, and I have already written privately to Mr. Consul Barnham to assist them if possible.

As regards the Armenians of Alexandretta, they are treated by the local authorities more or less in the same unkind manner as their co-religionists in other parts of Turkey, and I have no special facts to report on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. CATONI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 40.

Liste des Détenus Arméniens existants dans les Prisons d'Alexandrette.

Date de l'Emprisonnement.	Noms et Prénoms.	Motifs de l'Emprisonnement
28 Septembre, 1897	Ohannès Aivazian Mardiros Kechichian	Sous l'accusation d'avoir envoyé une pétition à la permission du Gouvernement. La pétition est que les deux députés, anciens élèves du Collège Américain de Tarsous, aux frais duquel ils étaient envoyés, M. Déchouman, ex-Directeur de cet établissement, actuellement en Amérique, avaient l'intention de fonder une école à Alexandrette pour les études des orphelins et enfants pauvres, mais leur emprisonnement imprévu empêcha la réalisation de l'entreprise.
28 „ „ „	Pilibos Khasikian	Il est accusé d'être la personne dont il est question dans une lettre saisie par les autorités et adressée de Chypre par un inconnu à une adresse également inconnue à qui on attribue l'initiale M. P. K . . . ian.
28 „ „ „	Krikor Djebranni	On prétend qu'il est en relation avec les Comités Révolutionnaires Arméniens se trouvant à l'étranger; il n'existe aucune probabilité pour la confirmation.
28 „ „ „	Dikran Kadjarian	Se trouve sous la même accusation.
28 October, „ „	Mihran Chilaguzian	Se trouve sous l'accusation d'être mentionné dans une lettre pareille à celle dont il est question plus haut, comme étant une personne de laquelle il faut se méfier sous le rapport des sentiments patriotiques.

NOTA.—Ces informations furent données par un Notable Arménien d'Alexandrette jouissant d'une bonne réputation locale.

No. 41.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 7.)

(No. 71.)

Constantinople, February 3, 1898.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 12 of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I have not failed to bring to the notice of the Sublime Porte Mr. Fontana's Report on the condition of Kharpout, as well as many similar complaints from other districts.

The inclosed copy of a Memorandum drawn up by Mr. Block, chief Dragoman of this Embassy, will give your Lordship an idea of the present state of the administration of the Anatolian Provinces and of the difficulty of making any effective representations at the Sublime Porte.

I called on Tewfik Pasha yesterday and spoke to him of the gravity of the situation in Anatolia. His Excellency thanked me for the various communications respecting the sufferings of Armenians and the excesses of the Kurds which I have from time to time brought to his notice through my Dragomans, and asked me to give him notes of the contents of the principal Reports in a connected form, which he could lay before the Grand Vizier. I promised to comply with his Excellency's request, and shall report my further action in due course to your Lordship

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Memorandum by Mr. Block

I HAVE not failed to bring to the notice of the Porte the deplorable state of things existing in the districts of Akhlat and Boulanik and in the Vilayet of Bitlis generally. I have spoken with the Foreign Minister, the Grand Vizier, and the Minister of the Interior, and, at the request of the latter, I have placed on paper the various statements of Mr. Crow with regard to the pillaging of Christian villages with impunity by the Kurds, the insecurity of the country generally, and the want of energy displayed by the authorities from the Vali downwards.

I have brought also to the notice of the Porte the state of affairs existing in the district of Kharput, and have repeatedly asked that the tax-collectors should treat the impoverished villagers with more leniency. I am always informed that instructions have been sent, but the result is, I fear, far from satisfactory. I have told the Grand Vizier and the Minister of the Interior that the authorities will end by driving the people to desperation (*cf.* Mr. Fontana's No. 56, your Excellency's No. 9 of the 6th January, and Lord Salisbury's No. 12 of the 15th January).

I have also represented on many recent occasions, and again yesterday, to the Grand Vizier that Her Majesty's Embassy notices with much regret that the local authorities in the Asiatic provinces continue to treat the Armenians with extreme severity, amounting at times, it would seem, to persecution, on the supposition that there are revolutionary agents at work among them, and I have pointed out that the greatest discrimination should be exercised not to confound the innocent with the guilty. I have asked that those arrested on suspicion should be at once examined, and, if innocent, should be set at liberty (*cf.* Major Massy's telegram of the 27th January and Captain Elliot's telegram of the 29th January).

I have also spoken to the Ministers above mentioned concerning the harsh measures in force against Armenians returning from abroad, as related by Mr. Longworth in his No. 4 of the 2nd January.

I find the Ministers, as a rule, well disposed to listen to the representations, but to what extent they are successful I am unable to state. The Minister of the Interior, for instance, assures me that the most positive instructions have been sent already to the ports of the Black Sea not to hinder the return of Armenians to their homes, *provided the authorities are sure that they are not mixed up in any troubles.* Of course, this proviso leaves to the authorities very great latitude, but the Minister declares that, unless it is shown clearly that they are accused of some crime, they are at once set at liberty. Yesterday the Minister of the Interior sent telegraphic orders to Van to have the arrested Armenians (Mr. Elliot's telegram of the 29th January) set free after examination, which examination was to be carried out at once. His Excellency, as well as the Grand Vizier, professed to know nothing of these arrests or of anything fresh in the situation at Van which might justify these arrests, although they declare that both at Selmas and Van, as well as in some other parts of the Persian frontier, there exist revolutionary bands who have relations with Armenians within the border.

With regard to the woman lately arrested at Van and exiled to Tripoli, the Minister of the Interior says she was arrested after consultation with Artic Pasha, and that all the story of violation and ill-treatment is absolutely false. As to the

supposed murder of Armenians who had delivered themselves up to the police by the police themselves, he states that they were killed in open fight after firing upon the latter, and the Vali could give ample and convincing information to Mr. Elliot on the subject. He added that the Vali was admittedly a good official, and it would be useful if Mr. Elliot and he were to compare notes before Mr. Elliot telegraphed here.

I find generally that the Porte is very despondent about the state of things in the provinces: the Turkish Ministers with whom I have spoken are convinced that something is brewing. The Grand Vizier told me that the Russians have unnecessary large numbers of troops on the frontier; that the Russian General at Kars, in a public speech the other day, foreshadowed an advance towards Erzeroum; and the note addressed by M. Jadowsky, when Chargé d'Affaires, concerning the Hamidié and the insecurity of the frontier districts is interpreted to mean that Russia will, sooner or later, take an opportunity of crossing the border. It is supposed that Russian Agents are at work fomenting discontent and disturbance, with the object of giving an excuse for an advance. On this account the Porte is most anxious to avoid trouble with the Armenians, but the Kurds are evidently masters of the situation, and, as long as there is the smallest suspicion that there is a revolutionary spirit among the Armenians, no efforts either on the part of this Embassy or the Porte will lead to the restraint and punishment of the Kurds, who are looked upon as the proper arm to use to crush disaffection among the Armenians. The Valis are powerless, and Zekki Pasha is the real Governor-General-in-chief of the country. I may even go so far as to state that, although the Porte would be only too glad to restore order and prosperity in the Armenian provinces, it is unable to do so owing to the want of courage and initiative at the Porte just as much as to the weakness of the local authorities. The Ministers are merely clinging to office, and vainly endeavouring to patch up the business and gain time; but, as a matter of fact, they are out of their depth, so to speak, and the Palace is much in the same position. The danger is evident to them all, but they see no way of averting it.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

Constantinople, February 2, 1898.

No. 42.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 28.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 7, 1898.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 55 of the 27th ultimo, inclosing a Report from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas with regard to the steps taken by him to prevent the sale of the property of Armenian villagers for the payment of taxes.

I request that your Excellency will convey to Captain Maunsell my approval of his action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 43

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 74.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 5, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 828 of the 26th December, 1897, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the disastrous effect on the condition of that vilayet, of the proceedings of Zekki Pasha and the Hamidieh Cavalry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 43.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Van, January 19, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Captain Maunsell's despatch No. [illegible] of the 7th December, forwarded to me by Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Erzeroum, on the 23rd [illegible] with regard to the Hamidieh Army Corps, Zekki Pasha, at Erzinghian.

As the despatches* and telegrams† in which I have referred to Zekki Pasha may convey a different impression from that produced on me by reading this despatch, I consider that an explanation is required from me when I state that the evils that this country suffers from are mainly due to Zekki Pasha, and that his removal would be an immense benefit, and go a long way towards restoring confidence and order.

Captain Maunsell has stated that Zekki Pasha is determined to foster the Hamidieh Cavalry at all costs, and sacrifice any one who opposes him in this his great idea.

This is exactly what the Mushir has been doing in the past with most disastrous results.

The Hamidieh Cavalry in this vilayet consists on paper of fourteen regiments or fifty-seven squadrons (one regiment has five squadrons and the remainder four). The squadrons are 120 strong.

Actually I believe their numbers are very considerably less.

The cost to this vilayet of the Hamidieh is considerable. Its amount at present I have not succeeded in ascertaining. For seven years no taxes have been paid by the tribes furnishing these regiments. Orders have now come to collect the taxes with arrears. These orders cannot be carried out without the use of troops, and this would raise a Kurdish question in a somewhat acute form.

Since the formation of the Hamidieh regiments the revenues of this province have steadily declined, and continue to decline.

The "Salnameh" for the current year estimates as follows:—

	Piastres.
Revenue	11,734,401
Expenditure	6,303,992
Balance	5,430,409

Actually, moreover, the amount of revenue realized has fallen far short of the sum necessary to administer the vilayet, and money from other vilayets and Constantinople has been sent here for the purpose, and still the officials, zaptiehs, police, and troops are many months in arrears with their pay, and the evils that necessarily follow such a state of affairs, such as discontent, inefficiency, and corruption, prevail to an unusual extent.

The reason of all this is not far to seek. The Kurds in general, and more particularly the Hamidieh, not only pay no taxes themselves, but they have robbed and harried the Armenians who would pay to such an extent that, in many cases, they are unable to find enough to support existence on. Terrible poverty and distress, as I have already had the honour to report to your Excellency, are the result, and very many of these, the most industrious and thrifty inhabitants of the province, are exiles or beggars. I need not go farther into this aspect of the case, which has doubtless been repeatedly brought to notice by others as well as myself.

I may, however, mention that I have been told by a missionary who has been nearly thirty years in the country, that the condition of the Armenian people now is incomparably worse than he has ever known it, even during the time of the war with Russia.

The Kaïmakamliks of Perigri Argisch and Mahmoudi are entirely in Hamidieh hands. Not a parah of taxation is realized from them, and the government of the vilayet is not recognized.

I have in the above-quoted telegrams and despatches reported to your Excellency how, when Shemshi Pasha, the acting Vali of Van, tried to make the Kurds amenable to the law and to secure safety of life and property, he incurred the enmity of the Mushir, Zekki Pasha, who, by underhand intrigues and every means in his power, has

* Nos. 28, 42, 45, 46, and 70 of 1897.
† June 7, August 9, 13, 19, 26, 28, and 31, September 1, 11, and 25, November 11, and December 15, 1897.

striven to bring him into disgrace. More particularly was this the case last August, when the attack by Armenian revolutionists on the Kurds, and later still the presence of armed bodies of them in Van, had aroused fanatical passions to a dangerous extent.

It is the Mushir, Zekki Pasha, who by protecting, if he does not instigate, the Kurds to lawlessness and outrage is solely responsible for the state of affairs to which I have alluded, or at any rate for the continuance of it.

As regards the military value of the Hamidieh, for which such sacrifices must be made, I can with confidence state that as at present organized they are worse than worthless. They have a strong inherent dislike to getting hurt, and absolutely no discipline to enable this weakness to be overcome.

They are, on the other hand, always ready for outrage and robbery. In war they would devour and waste the supplies in the country, and so exasperate the inhabitants by their conduct that these would welcome and assist an enemy who would rid the country of their presence.

When in June 1896 the Kurds came to Van to harry the Armenians, the fact that there were a few men with rifles in a street would cause them to give that street a very wide berth.

A few year Boy were unable to prevent the Armenian revolutionists from crossing the frontier, nor had they the resolution to seriously tackle them when they had crossed. Small bodies of from thirty to fifty made their way through them and got into Van.

Near Perigri, one of these bands thirty-two strong were surrounded in a little village by 400 Hamidieh of the Shevli tribe under Jaffir Bey (mentioned in telegram of the 7th June, 1897, and despatch No. 28), and 100 of the Livli tribe. At nightfall the Armenians broke through and reached Van, 40 miles distant, with the loss of three of their number, who strayed in the dark and fell into the hands of the Kurds. Only one Kurd was killed and two wounded.

Sheref Bey, formerly Kaimakam of the 20th Regiment (Shikefti tribe), the wearer of a silver "Imtiaz," and 4th Class Osmanieh, may be taken as an instance of an Hamidieh officer, who the Mushir considers especially worthy of honour.

Last August he was in camp with 200 men of his regiment on the Persian frontier, which it was his duty to watch. He allowed himself to be surprised one morning at daybreak by a party of Armenian revolutionists. He escaped by crawling ignominiously away on his stomach, thus avoiding observation, though he received a slight wound. His wife and about 150 of his people were killed. He and his tribe were reported as utterly cowed by the rough handling they had received.

His conduct on this occasion appeared all the same to call for special recognition. He was promoted to Mir Alai, and was not long before he gained further distinction by attacking some defenceless villages across the border in Persia and mercilessly slaughtering the inhabitants, men, women, and children, Christian and Moslem alike.

Two or three weeks ago he robbed a Persian caravan, and has thus caused a fresh difficulty between the Persian and Turkish Governments.

It is hopeless to expect that any body of men thus officered will ever be of any use in the field. There are a few Nizam officers with the Hamidieh, but they are not above the rank of Captain, and can effect nothing one way or another.

The Turks are very bitter against the Hamidieh and their protector, Zekki Pasha, and do not hesitate to express their opinions.

There are lots of Kurds in the Nizam battalions here. All the officers I have questioned about them say they make good soldiers and are not troublesome, though at first they are handicapped by not knowing Turkish.

The Hamidieh organization is thus not the only way in which the Kurds can be made subject to discipline.

In fact it not only prevents any idea of military discipline from being instilled into them, but places them above the ordinary law of the land.

As regards the supposed intention to concentrate troops at Mush and Erzeroum during the coming spring, nothing seems to be known here. Nor are there any signs that any aggression is intended by Russia in the near future. If anything of the sort were being contemplated, the chances are that rumours would reach Van, as many Armenians from here are in various parts of the Caucasus, and any unusual preparations would be very likely to excite notice.

Beyond this it is impossible to form an opinion, but I beg permission to remind your Excellency, of the apparently motiveless concentration of troops in this vilayet last autumn.

[illegible] expense, and the exhaustion of the existing resources of the country, are a hardship to officers and men who have to leave their

families in distant towns utterly unprovided for owing to their pay being much in arrears, while the Redifs are withdrawn from earning a living, and on the inhabitants, who are subject to the various requisitions and impositions inseparable from the movement of troops in this country, they impose a heavy burden.

It is suggested, and I incline to the belief, that Zekki Pasha has an object of his own in creating the feeling of unrest these movements engender.

As regards the report that the Mushir means to avail himself of an opportunity, should troubles arise, to place himself at the head of an independent Kurdistan, it is, of course almost impossible to obtain direct confirmation.

When I heard it, I concluded that the circumstances justified me in reporting it to your Excellency.

Zekki Pasha's influence with the Kurds was then supreme. He was looked up to as the one man from whom they had everything to fear or expect. Since then, however, he has been violently assailed on all sides, and, I believe, does not feel his position so secure as it once was.

More important than this is his quarrel with the Kurd Pashas, Hosein, Emin, and Haji Temir. The exile of these men is a great blow to his prestige and influence, and encourages the hope that his own downfall is not far off.

It is difficult to get at the facts of this quarrel. All I can learn for certain is that Emin Pasha telegraphed to the Sultan that the Mushir, Zekki Pasha, had given Patnotz and Aintab (near Perigri) to Hosein Pasha. He questioned his right to do so, and declined to remain under Hosein Pasha's orders, and stated his intention of going to Persia. I believe Haji Temir either joined in this telegram or sent one himself to much the same effect, but of this I am not certain.

As regards the statement that Zekki Pasha "is not a man likely to countenance or set on foot underhand intrigues against the supreme Government," I beg to submit that he is always engaged in underhand intrigues against the men to whom his Sovereign has intrusted the government of the various provinces, nor does he scruple to use any means to insure the downfall of those who incur his enmity.

Zekki Pasha is said to be a man of great abilities, and Captain Maunsell bears very high testimony to them.

That he does not use them for the good of his country is the conclusion to which I am impelled by the facts that from time to time I have had the honour of bringing to your Excellency's notice.

I have, &c
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 44.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 76.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 7, 1898.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 11 of the 15th ultimo, respecting my proposed action with a view to obtaining the release of the Armenian girl, Anneh Kechmechian, I have the honour to report that, in deference to the opinion of the French and Italian Embassies, the joint representation on her behalf has been delayed till after the 15th day of Ramazan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 45.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 77.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 7, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 74 of the 5th instant, inclosing a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, commenting on Captain Maunsell's report on the subject of his visit to Marshall Zekki Pasha, I have the honour to transmit to your

Lordship herewith copy of a despatch received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, explaining the apparently divergent opinion of Captains Elliot and Maunsell.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January* 17, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a despatch,* which I have received to-day's date, addressed to your Excellency by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, commenting on Captain Maunsell's despatch to Your Excellency, No. 1 of the 7th December, on the subject of his visit to Zekki Pasha, the Mushir commanding the 4th Army Corps at Erzinghian.

I take the opportunity of repeating that I concur entirely in Captain Elliot's views with regard to the baneful influence exercised by Zekki Pasha upon the administration of the eastern vilayets of Asia Minor and the folly of sacrificing every other interest of these provinces to that of the Hamidieh Cavalry, which Captain Elliot gives excellent reasons for considering worse than useless as at present organized.

It appears to me, however, that there is nothing irreconcilable in the opinions of these two officers, when one considers the different points of view from which they have approached the question. Captain Maunsell's despatch I read as a purely military report, in which no attempt is made to discuss the ultimate political bearing of the Mushir's attitude towards the Kurds and the civil authorities of the country. He merely accounts for that attitude to the best of his ability, and I do not understand him to justify or approve of it on political or even military grounds.

On the other hand, Captain Elliot's residence at Van has rendered him keenly alive to the disturbing and destructive effects of Zekki Pasha's action, to which so strong and frequent reference has been made by every Consular officer in the district, and he is naturally anxious lest the force of his reports should be impaired if the impression is now conveyed that Zekki Pasha has only yielded to the military exigencies of the situation, and that his policy having been dictated by stress of circumstances, he is not to be held responsible for its disastrous consequences.

I do not believe that it was Captain Maunsell's intention to convey any such impression, but, in case I am mistaken, I should wish to put it on record that it would be an entirely erroneous one, and not justified by the real facts of the case, which have been so fully reported by my colleagues and myself.

With regard to Captain Maunsell's reports of the military preparations for the concentration of troops at Erzeroum and Mush, I have only to say that the concentration at Erzeroum is an accomplished fact, and that the measures ordered at the end of November for the transport of military stores to Mush, though countermanded afterwards, leave no doubt in my mind that at the moment it was intended to assemble a considerable force in the Mush or Bitlis neighbourhood in the coming spring. The fact that no signs were perceptible of any intended aggression by Russia proves nothing, when one considers the liability of the Turkish military authorities to motiveless panic, and the frequent dislocations and concentrations of troops which have taken place without any apparent menace from beyond the frontiers of the Empire.

Coming to Zekki Pasha's personal character and qualities, I cannot but agree with Captain Elliot that his countless intrigues against the Civil Governors of these provinces, especially those who have endeavoured to do their duty, are not consistent with Captain Maunsell's statement, made after a very short acquaintance, that "he is not a man likely to countenance or set on foot underhand intrigues against the supreme Government."

As to his being "well qualified to take command in the field," he has, so far, given no proofs of capacity as a leader of men; his education and intelligence are, I think, below the average even of Turkish Generals, and I suppose that Captain Maunsell alludes rather to his qualities of energy, comparative youth, fine presence,

* Inclosure in No. 48.

and great physical strength and endurance, in respect of which he is without doubt well fitted for the active command of troops in the field, though not necessarily for the direction of a campaign against a serious adversary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 46.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 78.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 7, 1898.

HAVING seen a report received at the French Embassy from their Consul-General at Beirout respecting the detention of certain Armenian girls in Mussulman families in the district of Latakia, I inquired of Mr. Drummond-Hay whether he was in possession of any facts confirming his French colleague's statements. I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of the despatch I have received in reply.

I have asked Mr. Drummond-Hay whether he thinks it would be possible to obtain such further particulars as would enable Her Majesty's Embassy to intervene with any hope of a successful result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 46.

Consul-General Drummond-Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Beirout, January* 27, 1898.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 14th January, transmitting to me copy of a despatch from M. Souhart to the French Embassy respecting the detention of certain Armenian girls in Mussulman families, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have been lately in correspondence on the subject with Mr. Vitali, British Vice-Consul at Latakia, as shown by the accompanying extracts of two private letters from him.

On the receipt of his first report I inquired whether he had brought the matter officiously under the notice of the Mutessarif of his district, and in his reply he explained that such steps might render the detection and recovery of the girls more difficult.

With regard to the French Consul-General's statement that several Armenian girls are in the possession of officers belonging to the Redifs of Latakia, I beg to state that the only instances brought under my notice are those mentioned by Mr. Vitali, which are corroborated by M. Souhart's report, and the cases submitted to your Excellency in my despatch No. 41 of the 15th July, reporting the departure for Constantinople of the ex-Defterdar of Beirout with two Armenian girls, both of whom had been procured from Latakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 46.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(Private.)
(Extract.) [*Undated.*]

UN Youz-Bachi des Rédifs de Gébélé, district de Lattaquié, nommé Hamed Aga, possède une petite fille Arménienne âgée de près de 7 ans, que l'on croit être des Arméniens de Zéitoun. L'on dit aussi que le même officier avait une autre fille plus âgée qu'il a vendue à quelqu'un qui l'a conduit ailleurs.

La petite fille en question a tellement peur qu'elle n'ose pas, m'a-t-on assuré, sortir que rarement de la maison de son maître et ne veut pas parler à personne—peut-être parce qu'elle ne sait pas l'Arabe.

L'on m'avait prié de m'occuper du sort de cette malheureuse, mais voyant que je ne pourrais absolument rien à cause des difficultés insurmontables qu'auraient faites les autorités et les habitants de Gébélé, qui sont tous des Musulmans, j'ai refusé. J'ai, cependant, dû promettre de porter le cas à votre connaissance, rien que pour apaiser la douleur de la personne qui s'en intéresse et qui espère que cette pauvre créature pourrait être sauvée et rendue à ses parents.

Inclosure 3 in No. 46.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(Private.)
(Extract.) [*Undated.*]

Si je n'ai pas entretenu le Mutessarif du cas de la pauvre petite Arménienne, c'est parce que j'étais sûr d'avance qu'au lieu de prêter l'oreille à mes conseils, il aurait fait tout son possible à faire avorter toute démarche ayant but à sauver cette fille. Peut-être, encore, il m'aurait légué la besogne de prouver l'existence et l'origine de la pauvre esclave, tout en me créant, en même temps, des difficultés insurmontables et à la fin le sort de cette enfant serait devenu plus malheureux.

Telle est mon opinion, M. le Consul-Général, de son Excellence, et elle est basée sur un peu plus ou moins d'expérience. Aussi je ne fais que m'abstenir de traiter ces [illegible] tout ce qui ne touche pas les intérêts Britanniques.

No. 47

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 80. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 8, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy, privately obtained, of a note recently addressed by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires to the Porte, respecting the disorders caused by the Kurds on the frontier of the Caucasus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 47.

Letter addressed by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires to the Sublime Porte.

PLUS d'une fois l'Ambassade Impériale a eu à signaler à l'attention de la Sublime Porte les faits regrettables qui ne cessent de se produire sur la frontière du Caucase, où, grâce au manque de vigilance des autorités militaires et civiles Ottomanes, les brigands Kurdes agissent en vrai maîtres, habitués qu'ils sont par une complète impunité de voir dans les susdites autorités plutôt des alliés complaisants qu'une force gouvernementale appelée à maîtriser leurs goûts de rapine et de rébellion.

Une correspondance d'une vingtaine d'années, aussi longue qu'infructueuse, contient des preuves irréfutables de ce triste état de choses, et aujourd'hui encore les autorités du Caucase informent l'Ambassade Impériale que les incursions Kurdes continuent de plus belle en donnant lieu à de fréquentes rencontres avec les gardes-frontière Russes, qui ont malheureusement nombre de victimes à déplorer de ce chef.

Tout dernièrement encore un officier de police, Modastyrsky, a trouvé la mort dans une de ces rencontres, et le secrétaire qui l'accompagnait a été grièvement blessé.

C'est de préférence les confins du Gouvernement d'Érivan que les brigands Kurdes choisissent comme un fait exprès sans aucune surveillance militaire du côté de la Turquie.

Dans ces conditions la tâche difficile et ingrate d'une surveillance unilatérale d'une

frontière commune revenant aux troupes Russes seulement, il est à prévoir qu'elles pourraient être obligées en suivant les brigands de s'avancer un jour sur le territoire Ottoman, et d'infliger une fois pour toutes aux Kurdes limitrophes une correction exemplaire qui leur ferait oublier à tout jamais le chemin de la frontière.

Tel sera probablement le résultat de l'attitude des autorités militaires Ottomanes, qui paraissent plus soucieuses de s'assurer de la soumission apparente des Kurdes par une tolérance inconcevable de leurs méfaits, que de leur inspirer le respect de la frontière d'un Empire voisin.

Mais si les susdites autorités se montrent si peu rigoureuses pour les brigands Kurdes au risque même de créer sur la frontière une situation pleine de dangers, combien serait-on surpris de les voir agir dans leurs rapports avec les gardes-frontière Russes avec un excès de zèle des plus dangereux [illegible] une animosité des moins motivées.

C'est ainsi que le Lieutenant Kanouken, chef du poste de Karaourgan, accompagné par un sous-officier, fut arrêté le 19 Juin passé, vers 6 heures du soir, par quatre soldats Turcs, qui le mirent en [illegible], et le sommèrent de les suivre, sous prétexte que l'officier Russe se trouvait sur le territoire Ottoman, et qu'ils avait ordre d'arrêter et en cas de résistance de tirer sur tous ceux qui se trouveraient après le coucher du soleil à proximité de la frontière.

M. Kanouken fit observer aux soldats Turcs que le soleil n'était pas encore couché, et qu'eux-mêmes se trouvaient sur le territoire Russe, mais rien ne peut agir, et le Lieutenant, pour éviter [illegible] avec des subalternes ignorants, se rendit au poste Turc de Kotck, en l'espoir que le chef de celui-ci mettrait à la raison les agresseurs; mais le Caïmacan, au lieu de remplir son devoir, mit le Lieutenant Russe en état d'arrestation et le força de passer la nuit au poste sous la garde de deux soldats Turcs. Le lendemain, à 2 heures de l'après-midi seulement le Caïmacan, tout pâle et très émotionné, vint déclarer à son prisonnier qu'il était libre, et qu'il le remerciait d'avoir voulu passer la nuit au poste. Kanouken lui répondit qu'il n'était nullement dupe de cette comédie, et que la Russie saurait [illegible] [illegible].

L'échauffourée du Caïmacan s'expliquait par l'approche d'un détachement de troupes Russes qui échangeait déjà des coups de feu avec une vingtaine de soldats Turcs, qui prirent, [illegible] position, cette fois-ci encore sur le territoire Russe, d'où ils [illegible] [illegible] la fusillade. Heureusement, Kanouken arriva à temps, et mit fin à l'incident avant que le sang ait coulé.

L'Ambassade Impériale ne doute pas un instant que la Sublime Porte ne soit elle même émue de cet état de choses, et qu'elle ne considère de son devoir de tenir responsables le Commandant du poste de Kotck et ses subordonnés de leur conduite inexplicable à l'égard du Lieutenant Kanouken.

Les autorités du Caucase portent aussi à la connaissance de l'Ambassade Impériale que les colonnes en maçonnerie servant de marque-frontière sont systématiquement détériorées par les habitants Turcs. Ces colonnes, dont les bases existent encore, devront être restaurées par les soins des autorités Russes, comme cela a été déjà fait une fois, et la Sublime Porte est priée de vouloir bien déléguer à cette occasion des officiers compétents qui auraient à imposer aux militaires et à la population Turcs le respect de ces signes.

Pour conclure, l'Ambassade Impériale a l'honneur de transmettre ci-joint un compte rendu en résumé des dernières incursions Kurdes. Ce document contient des données suffisantes pour qu'on puisse au moins rechercher et punir exemplairement quelques-uns des coupables et établir en même temps la responsabilité des chefs militaires Ottomans, qui n'ont pas su ou voulu, dans [illegible] circonscriptions confiées à leur garde, empêcher les méfaits dont il est question.

Il dépendra alors de la Sublime Porte d'enrayer le plus vite possible les causes des dangers qui peuvent, malgré les relations amicales existant entre les deux Empires, troubler leurs rapports de bon voisinage sur la frontière du Caucase.

Ce but sera facilement atteint par une série de mesures combinées de concert avec les autorités militaires Russes, comme d'ailleurs Sa Majesté le Sultan, dans sa haute sagesse, l'avait déjà prescrit autrefois par la poursuite et la punition sévère des brigands et particulièrement par une attitude plus rigide à l'égard des tribus Kurdes et des régiments Hamidié dont les chefs eux-mêmes font souvent cause commune avec les promoteurs de troubles sur la frontière, comme par exemple le fameux Colonel Djubar, qui [illegible] catégoriquement son concours au Mutessarif de Bayazid, Ibrahim Bey, dans la poursuite d'une bande de brigands signalée par les autorités Russes, et qui fut immédiatement après nommé à la place d'Ibrahim Bey, tombé en disgrâce. Djubar est maintenu dans sa nouvelle fonction malgré les nombreux protestations de l'Ambassade Impériale.

Est-il nécessaire d'ajouter que les mesures susmentionnées deviennent de plus en plus

urgentes dans l'intérêt même du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, car il n'y a pas à dissimuler que les brigandages des Kurdes sur la frontière, encouragés par l'impunité ne tarderont pas à avoir un contre-coup en Turquie même, et la Sublime Porte ne saurait méconnaître le danger de troubles nouveaux dans les régions déjà tant éprouvées.

Inclosure 2 in No. 47.

[illegible] Cases of Invasion by Th[illegible] Kurds in the Government of Erivan in August, September, and October 1897.

LE 9 Août les Kurdes, sujets Ottomans de l'hivernage Kara, Ousso-Bako Oglou, Kara Abo-Oglou, et d'autres enlevèrent dix pièces de bétail chez le nommé Nabo Oglou, du village Djil-Davrich, dans les districts Sourmalinsky. Ce bétail fut repris aux ravisseurs.

2. Le 17 Août un détachement de quarante hommes du 2nd bataillon de Tirailleur Cosaques eut à soutenir une fusillade contre les Kurdes, dont un tué et un autre arrêté.

3. Le 20 Septembre [illegible] Kurdes [illegible] un troupeau de moutons de 870 pièces appartenant aux habitants de l'hivernage Dantakh, dans le district Sourmalinsky.

4. Le 29 Septembre les Kurdes, sujets Ottomans, Mahomet Abdoullah Oglou, Hadji Abdoulrahman Oglou, [illegible] Tedjo Oglou, [illegible] et huit inconnus emmenèrent quarante et une pièces de gros bétail appartenant aux habitants du village Kratchbakh, du district Sourmalinsky.

[illegible] cinquante-[illegible] bétail et trente chevaux appartenant aux habitants du village [illegible]

6. [illegible] Kurdes armés pillèrent une caravane qui se dirigeait d'Érivan à Novo-Bayazid.

7. Le 6 Octobre, une vingtaine de Kurdes armés emmenèrent trente chevaux et quarante et une pièces de gros bétail appartenant aux habitants du village Mikhaïlovka. [illegible]

No. 48.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 84.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 9, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 6 of the 6th January, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Sultan has now issued an Iradé granting five out of the sixteen points enumerated in the Memorandum presented by the Armenian Patriarch.

These five points are as follows:—

Permission is given to Armenians to travel freely in the Empire.

Armenians returning from abroad and known not to be connected with revolutionary projects are allowed to enter the Ottoman dominions without let or hindrance.

Governors are instructed to consult with the Patriarch's representatives in the provinces as to the number of schools, churches, orphanages, &c., damaged during the disturbances of the last few years, and to report to the Commission sitting at Tophané. A subscription, to which the Sultan will contribute, is then to be raised, and the proceeds will be handed to the Patriarch.

Armenians residing in the districts which suffered severely during the disturbances are exempted from the payment of the tax paid in lieu of military service.

The Patriarch is authorized to collect the debts of those Armenians who have left the country on account of the disturbances, and are unable to attend to their business.

I have, &c
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 49.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 14.)

(No. 85.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 10, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 54 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, confirming his account of the recent outbreak at Yarhissar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Sivas, January 29, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, in continuation of my despatch No. 17 of the 12th instant, I have now been able to further verify the details of the outbreak at Yarhissar.

Some villagers have now been able to make their way into Sivas, having been detained partly through fear of their Circassian neighbours and partly through the extreme severity of the weather.

I find that the statements of the Armenian villagers and of an Armenian zaptieh, who was employed in investigating the outbreak, confirm almost exactly the official version as given in the despatch above mentioned.

Further, that the Vali has directed the Agricultural Bank to lend the £ T. 250 necessary to pay off the first instalment of the debt due to the Circassians.

The villagers will be able themselves to raise the remaining sum of about £ T. 150, and the Circassian settlers will be removed early in March, when the weather becomes favourable.

The chief complaint of the villagers was directed against the municipality doctor, an Armenian, who was sent to look after the wounded.

The fees and travelling expenses which he demanded from his unfortunate compatriots was more extortionate than the most rapacious of Turkish officials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL.

No. 50.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie

(No. 35.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 14, 1898.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 26 of the 14th ultimo, inclosing a report by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, with regard to the spoliation of certain Armenian widows by tax-collectors, and the steps taken by him in bringing such cases to the notice of the Vali.

I request that your Excellency will convey to Mr. Fontana my approval of his action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 51.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 86.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 12, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, respecting recent murders and robberies at Zeitoun, of which he transmits a List compiled by the Rev. Mr. Macallum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 51.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Aleppo, January* 29, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of the 20th August, 1897, I have the honour to forward herewith a List which I have received from the Rev. Mr. Macallum of twenty-seven well authenticated murders of Zeitounlis since the conclusion of peace, and of details of property stolen from them.

Mr. Macallum has apparently prepared this List because I informed him that the Porte denied the accuracy of his statement that twenty-four murders had occurred prior to the date of my last despatch. This shows that he had not exaggerated the facts.

He reports that everything is quiet at Zeitoun, but that the distress among the people is very great. He has been allowed to visit Zeitoun without molestation, and thanks your Excellency for your intervention on his behalf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 51.

List of Zeitounlis murdered since the Royal Pardon issued in 1896.

I. Four days after the proclamation of pardon—
1. Saghat Oglou Khucher, Mukhalli.
2. A man from Shadaluk.

II. Ten days after the Proclamation—
3. Muggerditch Oglou Panos, Alabashli.
4. Kukur Hagop Oglou Artin, „
5. Manouk Oglou Asadur, „
6. Kil Sarkis Artin Oglou Sarkis, Alabashli.
7. Kil Sarkis Artin Oglou Nazaret, „
8. Donk[illegible] Oglou Agop, „
9. Kukur Khucher Oglou Sarkis, „
10. Paputji Artin, Zeitounli
11. Bahluz Yeghia, „
12. To[illegible] Oglou Nazaret, „
13. Nalband Oglou Panos, „
14. Set Oglou Panos, „ } Killed in Albustan.
15. Set Oglou Sarkis, „
16. Mecken Oglou Sarkis, „
17. Mujuk Oglou Mumatsagou, „
18. Arjig Oglou Mumatsagou, „
19. Parsum Oglou Vartevar, „

III. May 3, 1896—
20. Yezekil Oglou Kukur, Zeitouni, killed at Chakhé.
21. Buzak, Zeitouni, found dead near Ardaban.

IV. June 1896—
22. Gharavasl Oglou Vartevar, Zeitounli, killed in Albustan

V. October 1896—
23. Gizir Oglou Agop, Zeitounli, killed near Hemedjik.
24. Gizir Oglou Babé (son of above), killed near Hemedjik.

VI. May 1897—
25. Paslou Manouk Markar, Alabashli, killed at Kizileoz.

VII. July 15, 1897—
26. Gharanfil Oglou Mardiros, Zeitounli, killed at Chukur Hissar.
27. Bozoglou Agop, Zeitounli, killed at Chukur Hissar.

List of Animals stolen from Zeitounlis in same period.

1. One mare from Avedis Agha Ghaulian, stolen by Deonuk Mahmoud, of Bertis.
2. One horse, same owner, stolen by Kara Putuk, of Erejik.
3. From the seven Alabashlis, Nos. 3–9, above, three mules.
4. From No. 20 above, seven mules.
5. From Nos. 23 and 24 above, one horse and one donkey.
6. From No. 25 above, one horse.
7. In Gehen, from Kuskus Oglou Vaunes, one horse.
8. In Kizileoz, from Garabed Kehin, two mules.
9. In Kizileoz, from Bus, one mule.
10. In Khursuz, Pumar Vasgan Keish Oglou, one mule.
11. In Marash, from Bozdughu Vannes, Furnuzli, one horse, 1st January, 1898.

Mules	14
Horses	1
Mare	1
Donkey	4
Total	20

In March 1896, Merker Keish Oglou Khacher was wounded and robbed of 500 piastres at the top of Akbez Dagh.

No. 52.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 87.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 12, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana respecting the reports which have recently appeared in the European press as to the condition of that vilayet, which he states are greatly exaggerated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE

Inclosure in No. 52.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)

Adana, January 30, 1898.

Sir,

WITH reference to certain statements which have appeared lately in the European public press on the political state of this vilayet, in which reference is made to murders, plundering of caravans, continued imprisoning of Armenians, and other disquieting occurrences, I need hardly inform your Excellency that these are either entirely false or the real facts grossly exaggerated, as I should have otherwise hastened to inform your Excellency of such cases.

With the exception of the continued imprisonment of some twenty-seven Armenians and the delay in a decision in the Veltakys' case, all connected with the Brazzafolli incident at Mersina, I am happy to report that there is no serious cause of complaint at present in the state of this vilayet.

It is to be feared that an attempt to bring to justice the Armenian political prisoners may prove a matter of months, during which time exaggerated reports may go forth calculated to endanger the present quiet state of the province. If an amnesty could be arranged for all connected with this matter, we should end speedily a case which has been unduly magnified by the local Turkish authorities in the hope of gaining credit for themselves by bringing to light and checking what they wished to be considered as a great and dangerous conspiracy.

I am sparing no pains, locally, to persuade the authorities of the wisdom of sending reports which may close this unpleasant incident.

The matter has passed to Constantinople, however, and it is there alone that pressure can avail. In the meantime, several of the prisoners are down with sickness. Mr. Veltakys is suffering in health, and a continuance of this imprisonment without trial can only be designated as barbarous and inhuman.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 53.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 28.)

(No. 88.)

Constantinople, February 12, 1898.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, containing a report on the present state of that vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

Sir,

Adana, January 28, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have just completed a tour of inspection of the Chief Christian centres to the east of the Cilician Plain, visiting Missis, Hamidieh, Sis, Kars Bazaar, Osmanié, and the neighbouring villages. My object was, primarily, to personally ascertain the more immediate necessity for relief while examining the position of the Christian inhabitants, with a view to [illegible] by local authorities, by Moslem neighbours, state of agriculture and trade and the prospects, under existing circumstances, for the immediate future.

From information gleaned on this tour, as well as from well-based reports from other parts, I beg to submit the following remarks to your Excellency:—

Immediate necessity for relief:

While a want of prosperity, almost amounting to distress, exists everywhere, a period of actual starvation has not actually set in. The majority have sufficient to satisfy the primary needs of life, but in consequence of blighted wheat crops last year in these plains famine prices are now causing great distress to the already comfortless inhabitants. Thus,

30 piastres per "gulak" (bushel) is being paid for wheat which would, in any ordinary year, command but 15 piastres. This is the more unfortunate as future crops are thereby limited, seed grain, farm implements, and oxen having to be sold to provide food, and energy being paralyzed through partial starvation and want. The weather, also, is exceptionally cold and severe.

If, therefore, I had thousands to dispose of instead of hundreds my task would be light and I would at once start a general preliminary distribution. As it is, however, I have to take into consideration three very important factors, namely, very limited funds, the certainty of greater need a couple of months later, and the difficulty of selecting the really needy where all are eager to receive.

Considering these three factors carefully I have decided to postpone all except the most necessary relief, by which means my funds will go further and the really destitute will be easier to find.

The present necessary relief, which I am actually carrying out, consists in a fairly general distribution to the Christian villages round Hadjin: some 30*l.* in Adana town, and about as much more in the villages of Najarli (Payas district) and Nurpet (Kars district).

From reports, I fear that it will be necessary to ask your Excellency to recommend a further sum for Hadjin district later on, but upon this matter I shall be better able to report definitely later.

I cannot close this subject without urging the necessity for further appeals to the generosity of our people at home. If those who have helped us so generously already could be made to realize the importance of tiding over the next few months until the coming harvest, if they could be made to understand that the present is a crisis in our efforts for re-establishing, in a small way, the prosperity of the Christians of this country actually on the verge of starvation, I feel persuaded that fresh funds would follow such an appeal.

It appears to me that, failing such funds, all our work heretofore will have been vain. Starvation will follow and we shall have upon our consciences the knowledge that, for the sake of a few thousand pounds to tide these people over to the new crops, we have kept them alive for a few months in order to let them fall victims, eventually, to starvation, gradual but sure.

If, on the other hand, we can keep the souls and bodies of these poor people together for a few short months, until the next harvest in May, I can guarantee, with an average yield, that my province will then cease to be dependent upon charity, which must end by unmanning these people if too long continued. My appeal, therefore, is not one to be renewed.

As regards commerce, it may be inferred that it has suffered in proportion to the failure of last year's crops. Money is short, and without money commerce in any country is impossible.

If, therefore, the present state is sad and the future prospects, owing to present want, gloomy, it is, at least, pleasant to be able to record that matters are slowly improving with regard to the treatment of Christians by Government officials and Moslem neighbours. Whether it is that there is but little left to squeeze out by the pressure of the Armenian between the official and the Moslem neighbour, whether it is that the word has gone forth that the time is not opportune for such pressure, or whether it be that a sense of brotherly love is at length, although somewhat tardily, filtering into the hearts of the late persecutors, sure it is that bitter hate and animosity are no longer so apparent, although how long it might take to call forth a revival of such is a matter upon which we all may hold a very clear opinion.

Our more recently appointed officials are men who promise to give every satisfaction.

Zia Bey, Mutessarif of Mersina, is a pleasant man, with a good knowledge of French, who enjoyed a good reputation as Kaimakam of Tarsous a few years ago.

Moukhtar Bey, Kaimakam of Hamidieh, also knows French, and is a very pleasant young man.

The Kaimakam of Kars Bazaar, also, is a man worthy of praise.

Reports received from Hadjin tell me of great poverty, although, thanks to our cotton fabrics industry and corn-mill works, which employ many hands and bring in a profit for the relief of the poorest inhabitants, we are able to pull on for the present on the small sum which I stated to be necessary some months ago. I fear we shall be obliged to make a further appeal for a few hundred pounds to your Excellency before the end of the winter.

I propose starting out again in a few days to visit the Payas district, after which I shall be able to form an exact opinion on the wants of this vilayet.

I have returned to Adana for a few days in order to deal with some matters, including the question of the Armenian political prisoners at Mersina.

I find the local authorities willing to meet my suggestions as far as it lies in their power to do so, but they are hampered by orders from Constantinople, or else find themselves without instructions where they should be instructed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY

No. 54.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury. —(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 89.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 12, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 15 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting further respecting the deposition of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 54.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No 3.)
Sir, *Damascus, January* 29, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 10th instant reporting the deposition by the Bishops of the Patriarch Cyprianos, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, so far, no Iradé has been received from Constantinople confirming and ratifying this Act. Those, however, who are in a position to know how matters really stand, inform me that they have no doubt that the necessary confirmation of the Bishops' decision will shortly be received. They appear to rely on two facts which are, firstly, that M. Germanos (Bishop of Cilicia), the *locum tenens* of the Patriarchate, in reply to a congratulatory telegram which he dispatched to the Sultan on the occasion of His Majesty's birthday, received a telegraphic message of thanks, in which his position as Acting Patriarch was *ipso facto*, *i.e.*, in the wording of the address, recognized. In the second place considerable reliance is placed on the action and influence of the Vali, who is energetically supporting the Bishops in this matter, being convinced, as he informed me himself, of the justice of their cause.

I am informed on good authority that the Œcumenical Patriarch has shown a disposition to interfere in the matter of the deposition of the Patriarch Spiridon, and the election of his successor, but, in view of the fact that such pretensions, although they would appear to have some slight foundation in the past history of the relations existing between the Antioch See and that of Constantinople, have absolutely no chance whatever of being recognized now either by the Bishops or the people of this See, his Beatitude will probably see the wisdom of adopting a different attitude.

I shall not fail to keep your Excellency informed as to the further developments of this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. RICHARDS.

No. 55.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 91.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 14, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 26 of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Notice which I have received from the Sublime Porte, denying the assertions of extortion by tax-gatherers in the plundered

districts of the Vilayet of Kharput, which recently formed the subject of representations by this Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Memorandum.

LE Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz, interpellé à propos des faits mentionnés dans le *pro-memoria* de l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique en date du 31 Décembre dernier et 6 du mois courant (v. s.), répond que les autorités Impériales font preuve de la plus grande modération lors de la perception des redevances fiscales. Cela est tellement vrai que dans les deux villages de Menzilet et de Cimcim [illegible] depuis le dernier [illegible] on n'a perçu depuis le 1er Mars de l'année courante que piastres 6,160 et 7,395 [illegible] leurs arriérés d'impôts s'élèvent à piastres 91,800 et 51,500.

[illegible] la perception de redevances fiscales serait faite par les soins des autorités militaires est dénuée de fondement. Elle semble avoir pris naissance dans le fait que deux officiers s'étaient rendus dans les villages de Sourgouri et de Hussénite pour prendre consignation des sommes qui devait être versées à l'Administration Militaire à valoir sur les délégations fournies sur les rentrées du Fisc.

[illegible]

No. 56.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 93. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 14, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 19 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum containing the explanations offered by the Sublime Porte respecting the alleged murder of three Armenian revolutionists at Van and the violation and exile to Tripoli of the sister of one of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 56.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

(No. 36.)

WITH reference to the correspondence with Captain Elliot as to the woman "Zarooin," exiled from Van to Tripoli, and to the alleged murder of Armenians at Van, concerning which I have reported on several occasions, I now inclose a translation of a letter addressed by the Foreign Minister by the Grand Vizier on the subject, which I have obtained confidentially [illegible] and I suggest that it should be communicated confidentially to Captain Elliot, not necessarily for further explanations, but to show him that the Turkish Government holds other view as to the woman's guilt and the alleged murder of the Armenians.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

Constantinople, February 10, 1898.

Inclosure 2 in No. 56.

The Grand Vizier to Tewfik Pasha.

(Translation.)

I HAVE read your Excellency's despatch of the 25th Shaban, 1315, stating that the British Embassy had unofficially presented you with a *pro-memorid* alleging, amongst other things, that three Armenian brigands, having applied to the Government authorities at Van to make submission, had been killed, and that the sister of their leader, Dikran, a very young girl, had been imprisoned and violated by the police, and was about to be exiled to Tripoli. It was stated in the telegram (inclosed in your Excellency's despatch of the 16th Rejeb, 1315) from the Consul at Khoi and Salmas, whose truth and loyalty have been clearly established by events, that this Dikran had latterly called his adherents together for the purpose of making a disturbance in Van, and that his sister, Zaroubi, was one of the most dangerous revolutionaries of Van; therefore, both the Vali and, previously, Artin Pasha having recommended the removal of this girl from Van, an Imperial Iradé was issued for her to be transported to some distant locality such as Tripoli; and as to the alleged death of Dikran and violation of his sister, inquiries were made of the Vali of Van.

According to a telegram received in reply, the proofs in the hands of the judicial authorities show that this Dikran and two of his associates accused of crimes, and against whom warrants had been issued, and who have long been in hiding from the police, were encountered by troops and police sent after them, and eventually killed. In the fusillade which they poured from their Mauser rifles on the police and pursuing force one policeman's horse was killed and a soldier wounded in the hand. It is also established that Zaroubi, after being for six months in prison last year, and liberated at the amnesty, did not give up her seditious practices, but belonged to the class of women who invite immoral persons to their house, and it was proved last year (when Saad-ed-Din Pasha was Acting Vali) upon official application by the Armenian Metropolitan, and at an examination then held, that she was not a virgin; further, as she was guarded by a sufficient number of Mussulman and Armenian police, and was never queried in the room where she was confined by an Armenian woman, there was no possibility of her being molested. Moreover, she has made no statement or complaint to this effect. It would seem, therefore, that the report sent by the British Consul at Van as to the assault on and projected exile of this girl, whose seditious practices have been fully established by inquiry, has its origin in insinuations made by revolutionaries with a view to showing that she is innocent and unjustly ill-used. For otherwise it is clear that the Agent of so old a well-wisher of Turkey as England would never use such language respecting the acts and officials of our Government. I therefore request you to be good enough to consult Artin Pasha and communicate the above to the Embassy in a suitable manner.

(Signed) RIFAT, *Grand Vizier.*

January 20 (*February* 1), 1898.

No. 57.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 21.)

(No. 95.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 15, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 65 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, containing further information respecting the Armenians now confined in the prison of Alexandretta.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)

Sir, *Aleppo, February* 3, 1898.

VICE-CONSUL CATONI having forwarded to me a copy of the Report which he addressed to your Excellency on the 24th ultimo respecting the Armenians, named

No. 57*.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 97.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 15, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, requesting permission to visit the Persian frontier early in the spring in order to ascertain the truth of the report that Armenian revolutionists are again assembling at Selmas.

In view of the importance of the matter, I have approved Captain Elliot's proposal to undertake this journey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE

Inclosure in No. 57*.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Van, January 29, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that it is stated that the Armenian revolutionists are again assembling at Selmas.

Spies are said to have been sent by the Government from Bashkala, and to have returned with the report that there are 1,000 of them there.

This figure is ridiculous, and though I do not think it probable that the revolutionists are in a condition to carry out any important undertaking against the Turkish Government, it is still possible that, untaught by the past, they may be contemplating some act of folly.

In view of the importance of this matter to the security of this vilayet, I beg your Excellency's sanction to visit the frontier districts of Persia early in spring, in order to ascertain what is actually happening, and how far the Persian Government has taken steps to prevent a renewal of last year's occurrences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

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in the margin,* who are now in prison at Alexandretta, I have the honour to supplement his report by stating that I called upon the Vali to bespeak his interest on their behalf, and his Excellency informs me they will be put upon their trial immediately after the Bairam.

The charges brought against them are those stated in Mr. Catoni's Memorandum, with the addition that Mihran Chilagopian is accused of theft.

There is no evidence that they have been subjected to special ill-treatment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. D. BARNHAM.

No. 58.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)
Sir, [illegible] 1898.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. [illegible] of the 15th instant [illegible] the report of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, [illegible] permission to visit the [illegible] to the movements of [illegible]

[illegible]

I am, &c.
(Signed) [illegible]

No. 59.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

(No. [illegible])
My Lord, [illegible] 1898.

IN my despatch No. 173 of the 31st December, 1897, I had the honour to report to your Lordship the arrival in Tabreez of some revolutionary Armenians armed with [illegible] provided with cartridges, and the steps which I had taken with the Persian Government for their disarmament.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh has since communicated to me a telegram, which his Excellency had received from the Governor-General of Azerbaijan, in which it is stated that the information had arrived too late, the Armenians having already left for Salmas, the scene of the disorders of last year, but that he had dispatched a horseman to arrange with the local authorities for their immediate arrest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 60.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 102.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 20, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 47 of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting that the zaptiehs at that town are in a very discontented state owing to the non-payment of their salaries.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

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* Ovanes Aivazian, Mardiros Kichikian, Philipos Khasikian, Krikor Djibrodian, Dikran [illegible] Mihran Chilagopian.

Inclosure in No. 60.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)

Kharpat, February 1, 1898.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 5th ultimo, reporting that the police at Mezreh had tendered their resignation through discontent at receiving no pay, I now have the honour to report to your Excellency that twenty-six zaptiehs, belonging to the gendarmerie stationed in the town of Kharput, sent in a mazbata yesterday to the Vali, calling his attention to the fact of their having served for many months past without pay, and of their now being unsupplied with firing or petroleum in spite of the severity of the winter—the coldest experienced in this vilayet for the last twenty years—and submitting that, under such circumstances, they could not much longer remain in the force.

The authorities informed the applicants that if they wished to resign they might do so, one by one and not simultaneously, but promised at the same time to supply them with charcoal and petroleum in the immediate future. The Vali subsequently conferred with the Alai-Bey and the Bin-Bashis Sari, Mehmet Effendi, and Murad Bey (who are respectively Colonel and Majors of the local gendarmerie), as to what could be done to satisfy, in however small a degree, the claims of the malcontents. But the exiguity of the funds at Raouf Bey's disposal render it improbable that a single month's pay will be [illegible]

The case of these men seems the harder, inasmuch as their duty is comparatively onerous; and the mounted zaptiehs are compelled to take long journeys to distant villages, or accompany the post as outriders through the deepest snow and severest cold. Some of them have received no pay, it appears, since the date of their enrolment by Shakir Pasha, whilst the large majority have arrears owing them varying, in period, from twenty to five months. A few of the more fortunate who are attached to the headquarters of the Vali, Defter-Dar, [illegible] and Mehmet Effendi, received their pay regularly up to two or three months ago, but, as a general rule, the entire daily remuneration of the unmounted zaptiehs has for long past been limited to somewhat less than an oke of bread, to which is added, in the case of the mounted zaptieh, barley and straw for fodder.

I am informed that villagers have quite recently complained to the authorities that zaptiehs roam about the villages and pilfer corn to supply the needs of their own families.

In conclusion, I would submit that there appears but little doubt that the Vali, Defter-Dar, Mektoubji, Alai-Bey and Bin-Bashis referred to, succeed, notwithstanding the general poverty, in drawing their salary with tolerable regularity; but the lower and poorest of the officials, together with the police and gendarmes, are left to shift, more or less, for themselves.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 61.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 106.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 23, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 74 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the conciliatory disposition now manifested by Zekki Pasha, who [illegible] attributes to the fact that he feels the insecurity of his position.

I have, &c.

For the Ambassador,

(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)

Van, February 2, 1898.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 1 on the subject of Zekki Pasha I have the honour to report as follows:—

The tone now adopted by the Mushir towards the Governors of the provinces has considerably improved of late.

This is attributed to a desire to propitiate them, not from any worthy motives but because he feels his position insecure.

The following circumstance that has come to my knowledge lately appears significant in this connection:—

A European [illegible] of the Public Debt passed through Erzinghian towards the end of last year [illegible] number

He made a short visit of about ten minutes on the Mushir. Shortly afterwards, to his astonishment, an aide-de-camp came to announce that Zekki Pasha was about to return his call, and the Mushir arrived with some of his staff, and, during a visit that lasted [illegible] two hours, proceeded to set forth what he had done and intended doing with regard to the Hamidieh and other matters, in short, an elaborate defence of his conduct. He said that he had made three requests, all of which had been refused. These were, [illegible] to go to Constantinople for transfer to another command, and for permission to retire.

The Mushir appeared very uneasy in his mind.

The gentleman to whom these confidences were made, far from inviting them, did all in his power to turn the subject, but without success.

As he did not consider that his official position entitled him to the attentions that were paid him, he concluded that the Mushir wished him to be the means of conveying his exculpation to the various Consuls, with most of whom he was known to be on intimate terms.

He did not, however, feel disposed to lend himself to this project. It was only by accident that I heard what had passed between them, but from a source and in a manner that leave no doubt as to what actually occurred.

I have also heard that the Kurd Pashas who were recently exiled, and to whose quarrel with Zekki I alluded in my despatch No. 1 of 1898, charged him in a telegram to the Sultan with [illegible] to make him "King of Anatolia."

They left, it [illegible] they would expose everything that went on here to the Sultan.

A report that I am unable to verify, states that a telegram or letter has been sent from Erzinghian also by some officers there complaining of the Mushir.

It appears that Zekki has reason to consider his position insecure. It is most earnestly to be desired that his apprehensions are well founded.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 62.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 107.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 23, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 784 of the 27th November, 1897, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, stating that the difficulties attending the election of the Greek Catholic Patriarch of Antioch have been overcome.

I have, &c.

(For the Ambassador),

(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 62.

Consul-General Drummond-Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Beirut, February 9, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 71 of the 17th November, 1897, relating to the difficulties connected with the election of the Greek Catholic Patriarch, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Governor-General of the Lebanon has been instructed by his Government to authorize the Papal Delegate to attend the Convocation of Bishops in an officious capacity, and with the condition that he will have no right of presiding or voting at the meeting.

It is reported that the Bishops will assemble on the 10th February at Saba, near Djouny, in the Lebanon, as was originally arranged, and that the result of the elections will be known on the 12th instant.

I have, &c.
(signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 63.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 109.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 23, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, containing details respecting the imprisonment of Armenians in that vilayet on political charges, the murder of three revolutionists by police and troops, and the case of a young girl, the sister of one of the murdered men, said to be condemned to exile in Tripoli.

Captain Elliot has since reported by telegraph that thirty-three Armenians were being tried as revolutionists, and that the Vali had spared no effort to secure their conviction. Ten of the accused had avowed their guilt, but the remainder were, in Captain Elliot's opinion, perfectly innocent, and were simply victims of the malignity of the police. The intervention of Her Majesty's Embassy was urgently asked on their behalf.

I have caused representations to be made at the Sublime Porte, and the French Ambassador has done the same, but your Lordship is aware of the Turkish official view of these incidents, which is recorded in the Grand Vizier's explanations, already forwarded in my despatch No. 93, Confidential, of the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 63.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Van, January 24, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to submit a Report on the state of affairs here, which, I regret to say, is not satisfactory.

There appears to be little doubt that the revolutionists are, for the present at any rate, powerless to give any trouble.

The moment seems propitious for conciliating the Armenian population, restoring confidence, enabling trade to be resumed, and the people to recover from the desperate plight into which they have fallen.

Unfortunately, this view does not seem to recommend itself to the Government.

There are upwards of fifty Armenians in Van prison who have been awaiting trial on political charges, some of them for over four months. Two have died in prison here, and two at Bashkala.

At Bashkala there were originally fifteen prisoners [illegible] by the Persian Government. I hear the survivors have now been tried. One is condemned to death, some to terms of imprisonment ranging from five to fifteen years, and one or two [illegible]

There is every reason to believe that the unfortunate men are innocent, and that their offence consisted in not being able to bribe the Persian officials who arrested them.

Very little suffices just now to get an Armenian into prison.

After the Korubash affair, about which I telegraphed to your Excellency last week, twelve or thirteen men were arrested there. The Defterdar has procured the release of seven of these, but the look-out for the remainder is bad. These wretched men appear to have done all that was possible [*sic*], and yet they have got into trouble.

The case is briefly this:—

Three revolutionists for whom search was being made in Van left the gardens on the night of the 8th, and took refuge in the village of Korubash, about 2 miles distant across the plain.

Word was sent to the authorities, and on the morning of the 9th troops and zaptiehs went out, and returned a few hours later with the bodies in a cart, giving an account of a desperate battle.

I subsequently ascertained beyond a doubt that the three men left the village on the approach of the troops, and tried to escape. On finding themselves overtaken, they surrendered.

I doubt whether they fired a shot. They were shot down at a distance of a few yards as they held their rifles in the air, and called out that they threw themselves on the mercy of the Government.

The Alai Bey, Issat, who was in command, and the Second Commissaire of Police, Husni, whose conduct last September I had the honour of bringing to your Excellency's notice in my despatch No. 49, were most prominent in the ruffianly business.

The men's bodies were riddled. I visited the spot some days afterwards, and though there had been a fall of snow since the occurrence, it was easy to see what had happened. It was a slight hollow, not the place desperate men would select to make a stand; the snow was drenched with blood, and though foxes and wolves had visited the place, bits of flesh and bone were still to be found.

Each of the men had a modern magazine rifle, of Russian make, and 200 or 300 cartridges. Had they chosen to resist, they could have given a very good account of themselves.

I believe they had no intention of creating a disturbance in Van.

After the events of recent years, Armenians are hardly to be blamed if they desire to possess arms.

The Turkish Consul in Khoi, Persia (Ali Reza Bey), is, in my opinion, chiefly responsible for the trouble here. He persists in sending lying reports of the intentions and strength of the revolutionists, though when they really meditated a serious enterprise last spring I believe he gave no information at all. He stated that the Chief of the men killed at Korubash, Dikran Diroyan, could raise 10,000 men between Bitlis and the Persian frontier, and that the girl Zarooin (sister of Dikran Diroyan), was a Major-General among revolutionists. Other equally ridiculous fabrications originated from him.

In justice to the Vali, it must be said that he offered to telegraph for a free pardon for Dikran Diroyan and any of his associates who would surrender either to the Government or a Consul.

Dikran Diroyan sent word that he intended to surrender to me, but as after two days of grace he neglected to do so, the search was resumed with the result stated above. I believe that he really did intend giving himself up, but was not allowed to by his associates.

A day or two previous to the Korubash affair, Zarooin, who is a young girl about 20, was arrested and imprisoned. I have been assured on good authority that she was violated in prison by the police.

She left Van on the 17th January in charge of a company of infantry and some zaptiehs. One Armenian policeman was sent to protect her, but I fear he is not much use.

The officials here gave out that an Imperial Iradé had come, banishing her to Tripoli in Africa. I now believe this to be false, and merely stated to prevent the Consuls from being too insistent.

This girl, thanks to the Turkish Consul at Khoi, is believed to be a most dangerous revolutionist. I was able last summer to protect her against an objectionable form of persecution, and it was chiefly through her that I communicated with the revolutionists who came into the city last August after the affair with the Kurds on the frontier.

I acted at the Vali's request, and I have some reason to believe that the steps taken were not without effect in preventing disturbance in Van. The Turks at that time were in no small alarm. The unfortunate girl thus rendered a service to the Government.

It seems useless to point out to Shemshi Pasha that the Turkish Consul at Khoi has lied in the past and, doubtless, continues to lie. He has, unfortunately, ceased to take the advice of those by whom he was formerly guided, and has gradually got under the influence of a very low set.

Chief of these is the Public Prosecutor, Hamdi Bey.

The Bash Mudir of Posts and Telegraphs is also a particularly fawning and mischievous person. His name is Hussan Tahsin. He is suspected of opening letters and communicating the contents of telegrams.

The police are—as is inevitable where they are not paid—scoundrels; but the Alai Bey and Second Commissaire mentioned above are especially worthy of note.

No [illegible] exercise a bad influence on the Vali is a most insignificant looking person—his own Private Secretary, Omar Effendi.

The Mutessarif, [illegible] Ferid Effendi, is timid and useless, and appears to me too ready to intrigue.

The Defterdar, Makbul Bey, is the most clever and capable of the officials here. He came here [illegible] five months ago. Hitherto his influence and advice have been good [illegible] little.

If anything is to be done to restore this vilayet to something like its former condition, I beg to submit that most [illegible] should be lost in taking steps. The first of these appears to be that [illegible] Vali was charged with political offences and a settlement of the Kurd question.

The stringent orders to collect taxes from the Hamidieh that were received some time back are, thanks to the intervention of the Mushir, Zekki Pasha, now a dead letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 64.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury. (*Received March 7.*)

(No. 114.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 1, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 109 of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the violation of an Armenian girl in prison, and unsatisfactory state of affairs in the vilayet generally.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Van, February 7, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your two telegrams of the 5th instant.

With reference to the statement as to the violation of the girl, Zarooin, in prison, it was made on good authority.

Your Excellency doubtless knows how much value can be attached to the denial.

I regret that in my despatch [illegible] of the 25th January I inadvertently used the word "arrested" instead of "summoned," as I had intended to do.

I have reported these facts in order to give an idea of the policy now being pursued by the Government—a policy, I cannot help thinking, that is inspired from Constantinople, and that appears to have for its object the slow but sure effacement of the Armenian people.

One result of it is to recruit the ranks of the revolutionists. A summons is very likely to be followed by an imprisonment of indefinite duration while awaiting trial on some trumpery charge, and rather than face this contingency some prefer to hide from the law. From this to providing themselves with arms, and joining those who declare themselves the enemies of the Government, the step is a short one.

The trial of the men arrested after last year's disturbances is now proceeding. It would have concluded last week, had the attempt to conceal what was going on from the Consuls proved successful. It practically recommenced on our appearance.

This attempt I regard as a further proof of the bad faith that has lately become manifest here.

When the trial is concluded I will submit a report.

I beg to thank your Excellency for the action you have taken on my telegrams. I believe it has had a deterrent effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 65.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March 7.*)

(No. 116.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 5, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of two despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, respecting an accusation brought against an Armenian police officer, which threatened to provoke disturbances at Bairam, together with a copy of a telegram from the same source, stating that the feast had passed off quietly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 65.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, February 17, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Dikran Effendi, an Armenian police officer at Erzeroum, having been accused of insulting the Mussulman religion, advantage has been taken of the incident by the enemies of the Vali, consisting chiefly of ex-officials dismissed by his Excellency for misconduct, and some military officers, to stir up agitation among the Turkish population of the city. The affair has assumed such proportions that there is some reason to fear disturbances at the approaching Bairam festival, and it is indispensable that the Vali should be able to count upon the loyal co-operation of the military to avert disorder.

My French and Russian colleagues and I have thought it our duty to acquaint our respective Embassies with the circumstance, and to suggest that the Zeraskiorate should be got to warn the military authorities of Erzeroum to support Raouf Pash in his efforts, and hold them responsible for the maintenance of order.

I had the honour to report the substance of the above to your Excellency by telegraph to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES

Inclosure 2 in No. 65.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, February 19, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 17th instant, I have the honour to report the following additional details in connection with the accusation against Dikran Effendi and the agitation to which it has given rise at Erzeroum:—

Dikran Effendi is the Second Commissary of Police referred to in my despatch No. 22 of the 26th May, 1897, as a former Armenian revolutionary agent, who had of late distinguished himself by his vigour in following up his former associates, and by the brutality of his treatment of Armenian prisoners. It has been a matter of regret to me

that Raouf Pasha should have given so much of his confidence to a man of Dikran Effendi's character and antecedents, and it may be said that his Excellency is now paying rather dearly for his error of judgment. A few days ago Dikran engaged in a quarrel with the keeper of a Turkish bath which he frequents, and after using some rough and abusive language, arrested him. This supplied the enemies of his protector, Raouf Pasha, with such an opportunity as they are always on the look out for. A Mazbata was prepared, to which, in consequence of Dikran's arrogant and quarrelsome temper, hundreds of signatures were soon forthcoming, and telegraphed direct to the Ministry of Police at Constantinople, containing the invariable old complaint, which never fails in its effect against a native Christian, of having "insulted the Mussulman faith." The result was as expected, and orders came for the accused to be arrested and lodged in prison.

Now the authors of the intrigue had confidently counted on Raouf Pasha opposing the punishment of his protégé, in which case every arrangement was made for a violent demonstration of Mussulman fanaticism at Bairam, resulting probably in the Vali's disgrace and dismissal. Fortunately his Excellency was quick to perceive the danger, and has refrained from interfering on Dikran Effendi's behalf, at the same time that he has taken such precautions as he can against disorder. But the Commander of the Erzeroum Division [illegible] anything tending to discredit the Vali will be agreeable to his Chief, Zekki Pasha, and having the fate of his predecessor Zia Pasha before his eyes, is not likely to be anything but lukewarm in supporting him, if left to his own devices; while the "Commandant de Place," Mehmet Bey, a dangerous intriguer and a fanatic, who has distinguished himself in former massacres, is a partisan of the Mushir's, and can only be regarded as an element of danger under the circumstances. If, however, orders are telegraphed from Constantinople making it clear to these officers that disturbances are not to be allowed to take place, there will be little or no danger of any breach of the peace; the Vali's position will, if anything, be consolidated by the failure of intrigue against him; and Dikran Effendi can be left to take his chance of Turkish justice, as, whether he be innocent or guilty of the present charge, he is in no respect deserving of the smallest sympathy or intervention in his favour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 3 in No. 65.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Erzeroum, February* 24, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to report that the feast of Baïram passed off without any incident, thanks to the preventive measures adopted by the authorities.

The police officer of whom I spoke in my telegram of the 17th instant, against whom accusations were made, has been sent under escort to Constantinople.

No. 66.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 117.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 3, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 89 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the resignation of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Spiridon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Damascus, February* 21, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 3 of the 29th ultimo, giving further details concerning the deposition of the Orthodox Greek Patriarch, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that that prelate has now handed in his resignation officially.

It appears that on the 17th instant Benjamin, Bishop, of Diarbekir, arrived in Damascus from the Convent of Seidnaya where the ex-Patriarch is at present, and has been for some time past, residing, bringing with him the formal act of resignation voluntarily signed by Mgr. Spiridan. This fact having been announced to the Bishops assembled in Synod on the following day, they made an official communication on the subject to the Vali, at the same time requesting him to obtain an Imperial Iradé from Constantinople recognizing Mgr. Germanos, Bishop of Cilia, as *locum tenens* of the Patriarchate.

The situation being now very much simplified, the only difficulties that are likely to present themselves are those to which the rival claims of Greek and native (Syrian) candidates for the Patriarchal throne may give rise. The former are supported by the Vali and the official class generally on the ground that a Greek (rayah) Patriarch would be less amenable to Russian influence and interference than a Syrian; whereas if the choice were left entirely to the mass of the people, it is the candidate belonging to the latter category who would secure the majority of votes. If Greek influence wins the day, Mgr. Germanos is almost certain to be successful. If, on the other hand, it be decided that the new Patriarch should be a Syrian, it is not so clear who would be elected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 67.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 10.)

(No. 124.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 7, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Colonel Ponsonby, Military Attaché to this Embassy, respecting military preparations in Macedonia and Anatolia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Colonel Ponsonby to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3. Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to bring to your Excellency's notice that unusual activity is at present prevailing in the military offices at Constantinople.

1. Orders have been issued for a brigade composed of eight battalions to be taken from the force in Epirus to proceed at once to Kumanovo (north of Uscub).

A camp of observation is to be formed there, and will consist eventually, it is said, of two divisions, but the exact force is, I believe, not yet fixed upon, and will probably depend upon the gradual evacuation of Thessaly.

The place is remarkably well chosen for eventualities on the northern frontier, commanding the high road by Kustendil into Bulgaria, and the railway and high road by Vrania into Servia.

2. A volunteer corps of Mussulman Albanians is to be raised for service on the Bulgarian frontier; the Vali of Scutari is reported to have received the necessary instructions.

3. Orders have also been issued for the thorough repair of all telegraphic lines in

Macedonia, and the establishment of new stations where considered necessary for military purposes.

4. An Iradé has been issued for the repair of certain portions of the Chataldja lines.

5. In Asia, also, for some considerable time past preparations have been quietly going on to put the 4th Army Corps in a fit condition for active service. Roads in Eastern Anatolia have been improved. Quantities of stores and ammunition have been dispatched; 79,200 Mauser rifles (9·5 calibre) have up to the present been forwarded—more than sufficient to arm all the Nizams and Redif battalions.

A few days ago an officer belonging to the staff of this Ordu arrived in Constantinople for the express purpose of assisting to work out plans of mobilization and concentration.

He is to remain here until such plans are completed and approved.

Great secrecy is being maintained about these, and the schemes are being worked out at the Palace, and not at the War Office.

6. It is contemplated to construct, "as soon as practicable," a line of railway from Bergamos—northern terminus of the Smyrna-Aklissar Railway—to Panderma, on the Sea of Marmora, opposite to Rodosto; also from Rodosto direct to Ferejik.

This will be of great strategical importance, and render the railway communications between the 3rd Ordu (Macedonia) and its recruiting and reserve ground complete. It will also avoid the interference in Europe with the Constantinople-Adrianople line, which caused great inconvenience during the last war.

7. It may interest your Excellency to know, without entering into unnecessary details, that there are at present seventy-six battalions in Macedonia and Albania (exclusive of the troops in Thessaly and Elassona), and Epirus, but inclusive of eleven Mustahfiz battalions. Of these, twenty-six are distributed between Mitravitza and Egri Palanka, and two-thirds of the remainder of Egri Palanka, Djuma, Menlik, and the Mesta River.

I believe that these preparations are being made purely for purposes of protection, and not for aggression. It is difficult to gauge exactly the amount of importance to be attached to them, as the present Minister of War prides himself upon keeping abreast of all political contingencies.

I have, &c.

[illegible]

No. 68.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 10.)

(No. 125.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 7, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a letter which I have received from Mr Crow respecting the state of the relief work in the Vilayet of Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 68.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

Dear Sir P. Currie, *Bitlis, February 13, 1898.*

YOUR Excellency's telegram about the starvation cases reported to the Committee. I do not think there can be any foundation for them, at least as far as this vilayet is concerned.

The reports from Khizan are not unfavourable considering their condition. Garchigan is on the border between Van and Bitlis, and has been relieved by Van. Khurzan, though in this province, is so near Diarbekir, that it was found easier to distribute relief from there. I have had bad reports from the latter district, but no deaths from starvation.

The peasants are selling their fields for a mere song to the Kurds, as they have no means of cultivating them, and they are reduced to living on "gilgil," a species of coarse millet, which causes constipation and frequent illness, and many have died from that cause.

I am feeding 3,000 people, chiefly women and children, in Bitlis daily; but there has been no great run on the bakeries from the villages so far. The lack of clothing is rather terrible, and it is a wonder that some of them do not die from exposure. I am starting a clothing establishment next week, and getting some things made to cover the women and children who come in unprovided. I find it useless giving them cloth not made up, as they sell it for a few piastres to the first comer.

Hagop Effendi, the Dragoman, has been most useful and untiring during my stay here, and has rendered very good service throughout. The little breach between him and the authorities seems to have completely healed, and the latter are very civil to him.

The medical relief has been attended with good results. The boy who was taken in hand in June accompanied me to Saird, where he was a bit stronger, and was able to undergo an operation at Mardin, where I sent him to Dr. Thorn, as it could not be managed here. He now writes that he is cured.

Mr. Cole has gone home on leave of absence, which he much needed. He has been replaced by a young Canadian missionary, Ashdown.

The Miss Eley's have returned to Bitlis, and found their house has been completely ransacked in their absence by agents of the Revolutionary Committee, which is hardly gratifying after having devoted themselves to Armenian work for thirty years. They refuse to take any steps in the matter, so I am unable to help them.

The gendarmes resigned in force last week, and handed their swords to the Vali, as they got no pay. Three of them claim forty months' salary. The Vali borrowed 200 liras on his personal security from the Armenians, and gave them a month's wages a-piece to resume work.

The snow is deep all over the country, and the Kurds are hibernating. The plundering has entirely ceased.

I expect Menahan in next week. The roads are heavy, and he has been delayed in consequence.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

No. 69.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 10.)

(No. 128.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 7, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit a copy of a very interesting despatch by Captain Maunsell, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, on the policy of Zekki Pasha, Commandant of the 4th Army Corps, towards the Kurds, and on the apprehensions felt as to an advance of the Russians towards Erzeroum in the spring. These apprehensions exist in many quarters, and the recent attitude of Russia has created a widespread feeling of uncertainty as to her designs.

The Armenian Patriarch, in the course of a conversation which I recently had with him, expressed the opinion that the object of the enrolment of the Hamidié regiments was political rather than military, and was a portion of the scheme for assimilating the Kurds with the Turks, which had been pursued for some years past by the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 69.

Captain Maunsell to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Sivas, February 18, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Captain Elliot's despatch No. 1 of the 10th January last, and beg to forward the following reply as requested.

In my original despatch No. 1 of the 7th December, 1897, I stated that Zekki Pasha was a man incapable of intrigue against the Supreme Government.

I regret that perhaps I did not make this last word sufficiently clear

I put forward this explanation with the greatest possible deference, but in my opinion the Supreme Government of this country is practically a complete autocracy, consisting primarily of the Sultan himself, aided by such men as he chooses to favour; and this autocrat and his Palace coterie retain the sole power of governing, except in matters of more or less routine with which the Sublime Porte deals.

Zekki Pasha is one of these persons whom the Sultan trusts for the government, according to his ideas, of the greater part of Eastern Turkey in Asia.

As I have said, I do not think that Zekki Pasha intends to betray this trust and embark on schemes of his own.

Your Excellency mentioned, before I left Constantinople, some rumours that Zekki intended to set up an independent Principedom of Kurdistan, or had various schemes of [illegible] on hand.

After careful inquiries, I made the above report that I did not think him capable of such schemes.

In any case, it would not be in his interest to quarrel with his master, as together they might possibly have some chance of making a good fight against their enemy over the Russian frontier.

Once parted, the result would be that Zekki in his isolation would be immediately crushed by forces from over the border.

When at Erzeroum and Constantinople I received instructions from Mr. Graves and Captain Elliot, and am fully aware of the disastrous consequences of Zekki's influence.

Still, I respectfully submit that I think it necessary to look at this question not only from the point of view of Western civilization, but also from an Oriental standpoint, if the motives and modes of thought of this certainly remarkable man are to be properly determined.

Zekki Pasha is not a Christian or a humanitarian, but a Mahommedan and an Oriental.

From the former point of view, his acts have been in the last degree deplorable.

From an Oriental point of view, he has only followed tradition and the teachings of history, viz., when a subject population becomes troublesome through underhand revolution, or becomes so wealthy in goods or education as to be thought a menace to the ignorant and fanatical stagnation of Mahommedanism, the simplest method is to wipe out the offenders with the sword.

Pride by Zekki Pasha [illegible] his measures in this sense.

Again, Zekki is no doubt a capable and energetic soldier, and he would be blind both to his master's interests and his own if he did not estimate at its true military value the sustained exertions last summer of his northern neighbour in laying down a strategical railway along the well-marked line of invasion from Tiflis through Alexandropol to Kars, thus increasing immensely her sudden power of attack on the all-important fortress of Erzeroum.

The danger appears to him to be imminent, and according to his lights he has been endeavouring to train up a force of Kurdish cavalry to meet the horde of Cossacks he knows he will have to encounter.

As for the financial ruin of the country, he probably cares nothing. There are perhaps few Turkish Governors who do, or who look much beyond the immediate future. As regards the ruin of a thrifty and industrious Armenian population, it is scarcely likely that he cares anything for this either.

The subject population, which will be on his flanks and rear in war time, will only be the more cowed, and probably have fewer sinews of revolt.

I do not think that Zekki Pasha has any object of his own, as Captain Elliot suggests, in creating a feeling of unrest in the country by apparently motiveless concentrations of troops.

I was not in the country at the time, but I thought myself that the concentration last autumn was directed against Persia.

With such a real and imminent danger menacing him on the north, it would be palpable folly for any soldier, even of the meanest capacity, to think of suggesting mobilization merely to stir up the country and engender a feeling of unrest.

Although no news had reached Van by the 10th January of any intended aggression by Russia in the near future, I still beg leave to think that when spring opens and the country becomes practicable for military operations, we may expect a forward movement on her part.

I firmly believe that Zekki Pasha thinks likewise, and is ready at the first possible moment to mobilize the reserves, and concentrate his corps to meet this danger.

He sacrifices everything towards this end. He intrigues against, and, if possible, overturns any Governors who do not hold with his views on the Kurdish question, and do not seem useful instruments for carrying out his military policy.

I regret if Captain Elliot has understood me to say that I thought Zekki Pasha would ever, by his mode of training, make the Hamidié cavalry a useful military body.

I have always maintained that they will prove to be a perfectly worthless force; and will probably in the next war repeat their infamous exploits of murder and pillage at the siege of Bayazid and at other places in the 1877–78 war. I have stated this in my Military Report on Eastern Turkey in Asia,* 1892, and in that also I refer to Zekki Pasha as being a capable soldier.

Also in a military letter which I wrote just before leaving Erzeroum in December last. Although I am in a Consulate some distance from Kurdistan, yet I have had occasion to travel through almost all the Kurdish country, beginning with Sulaimania in the Baghdad Vilayet, and going north through Rowanduz Amadia, Iezire, Van, and Melasgird to Alashgird on the Russian frontier.

I have spent a fortnight in the tents of the Nomad Kurds on the Hartoshi Mountains between Iezire and Bashkala, without any zaptieh or cavass, so that they were free to tell me their aspirations and hopes.

I submit, therefore, that I do not speak entirely without experience.

The Kurds as a whole would not follow Zekki, or any other Circassian Pasha.

The Chiefs north of Lake Van, whose lands are easily accessible, no doubt fear him, but their actual friendship may be doubted.

The Kurds, as a nation, hate the Turkish rule, and the only men they would really follow to the end are their own Chiefs, either religious Sheikhs or tribal leaders, should one of these arise strong enough to combine the many turbulent clans under one strong head.

I think Captain Elliot must be confusing the sedentary Kurds of the villages with the large Nomad, or semi-Nomad, tribal Kurds, when he suggests that service in the Nizam is the best way of subjecting the Kurds to military discipline.

The former can be brought under ordinary conscription; the latter refuse to accept this, and the Government does not enforce it on them.

The essence of the Hamidié Cavalry Scheme was the enrolment of the men of the various tribes into some kind of military organization, seeing that they would not accept the ordinary conscription, and otherwise would give no service at all.

It is only in districts such as those north of Lake Van, easily accessible to Government, that these regiments have been formed.

In the south, in the basin of the Great Zab River, there are very few tribes (I think only the large Miran tribe) that have consented to form regiments at all.

The Nizam of the 6th or Baghdad Army Corps are largely recruited from Kurds of the villages who have lost their tribal organization. They are not thought very reliable troops.

The Kurds, taken as a whole, gave the Turks little assistance in the 1877–78 war, and I do not think they will be any more willing in the future.

They would welcome a strong and just Government accustomed to dealing with Mahommedan races, and I am sure, under English officers and non-commissioned officers, the many good military qualities which they undoubtedly possess could be brought out, and a really useful cavalry corps be raised. They would at least be willing soldiers, and not unwilling as they now are.

I lost no opportunity during my interview with Zekki Pasha of bringing home to him the evil effects of his military policy.

Taking the misdeeds of Hassan Pasha of Patnotz as an example, I explained that to permit such licence was in every way wrong.

Even from the point of view of military discipline alone, it would be better to hold a tighter hand on the Chiefs if he would not permit the ordinary civil law to be applied to them.

This may have had some effect on him. It may be technically correct that the Sovereign has intrusted the Government of the various provinces to the men against whom Zekki Pasha intrigues, but are these really trusted by the Sultan, and does he not rather set one of his special favourites, Zekki for example, to keep a strict watch over such, and depose them if necessary?

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL.

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* [illegible] I have not the book [illegible]

No. 70.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 12.)

(No. 71.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 12, 1898, 5.0 p.m.

THE late Vali of Diarbekir, Enis Pasha, has been gazetted as Vali of Busrah. This man, who is said to enjoy the protection of the Grand Vizier, was removed from Diarbekir on the representations of the British and French Embassies, who held him responsible for the persecution and massacres at that place. The presence at Busrah of a man of such bad character is likely to lead to strained relations in the Persian Gulf, and I have not failed to protest strongly against the appointment.

No. 71.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 139.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 7, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, respecting the recent outbreak of typhus fever among the troops at Zeitun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February* 27, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that typhus fever, similar in form to that which raged in the town of Zeitoun during the winter of 1895-96, has broken out in the garrison at that place.

At the time of the outbreak, which was early in Ramazan, there were 1,700 Regular troops in the barracks of whom one-half were attacked, and 150 cases were fatal.

Three hundred were removed to the hospital at Marash, where they recovered, and about the same number to Albistan, with similar result.

The Lieutenant-Colonel in command, a Bimbashi and nearly all the officers of the two battalions have been attacked as well as the three army doctors who were sent to attend the sick.

The epidemic was caused, as usual, by overcrowding and dirt, for although the new barracks are said to hold 2,000 troops on an emergency, there is not proper permanent housing for more than half that number.

Up to the present, I have not heard that the disease has spread to the town, which it probably will do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 72.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 132. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 8, 1898.

THE Armenian Gregorian Patriarch Mgr. Ormanian called upon me yesterday and handed me a précis of the reply sent by the Ministry of Justice to the proposals submitted to the Imperial Government by the Patriarchate on the 15th (27th) December last, as reported in my despatch No. 6 of the 6th January.

As his Beatitude pointed out, and as will be seen from a perusal of the papers, the so-called favours granted by Imperial Iradé to the Armenians are wholly worthless, their execution being dependent on conditions that do not exist or subject to exceptions that deprive them of all value.

The Patriarch admitted that the attempts he had been making in concert with Artin Pasha to obtain some improvement of the condition of his people from the

benevolence of the Sultan had proved a failure; and that His Majesty had in no way modified the policy, which he has pursued since the massacres, of depriving the Armenians of the means of regaining some portion of the property of which they have been plundered. There had been no diminution of the terrible destitution which prevailed.

The Sultan had impressed upon him that the Armenians must not seek the intervention of any foreign Power but must look to him alone to take such measures as he considered suitable. But meanwhile His Imperial Majesty did nothing for them, and the Patriarch felt that the only hope for the Armenians was in an understanding between England and Russia. From the triple alliance he said nothing was to be expected, they might be left altogether out of the question; but if England could agree with Russia as to a partition of influence under which Russia should assume the Protectorate of Eastern and Northern Asia Minor, while England should protect Cilicia and France Syria, the Armenian people might be saved from destruction.

I asked the Patriarch whether the Russians had given him any hope of support. He said that he had recently had an interview with M. Zinoview who had said that he could made no promises at present, and that the time had not yet come for Russia to take any decision in regard to the Armenian question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 72.

Memorandum.

(Confidentielle.)

LA lettre officielle du Ministère de la Justice et des Cultes, en date du 4 (16) Février, concernant les mesures arrêtées par Iradé Impérial en faveur des Arméniens éprouvés, ne fait pas explicitement mention des propositions présentées officiellement par le Patriarchat le 15 (27) Décembre dernier, mais seulement de quelques points désignés comme étant proposés au nom du Patriarchat et sans indication précise de la pièce originale relative à ces différents points. Les mesures qui sont l'objet de cet Iradé Impérial et de la communication officielle du Ministère de la Justice et des Cultes sont les suivantes:—

1. On affirme qu'il n'est pas vrai que dans diverses localités l'impot de l'exonération militaire soit exigé contrairement à l'Iradé Impérial qui en avait ajourné le payement pour un délai de deux ans. On promet de faire la restitution des sommes indûment payées, si l'on peut donner les noms des individus et les chiffres des sommes perçues. En attendant, on annonce l'envoi de nouveaux ordres aux Gouverneurs.

2. Relativment à la publication par les journaux des Actes émanant du Patriarchat, on ordonne que les censeurs en cas d'observations, en réfèreront au Ministère de l'Intérieur et si ce dernier a des observations, il devra à son tour s'adresser au Patriarchat, et après éclaircissement et explications fournies par celui-ci, décider s'il y a lieu d'admettre la publication de ces Actes.

3. Pour ceux qui ont dû émigrer pendant les derniers événements, on statue qu'ils pourront retourner à Constantinople s'ils y ont des maisons ou des familles ou des affaires, à condition que le Patriarchat donne une attestation en leur faveur, et qu'ils se portent garants solidaires les uns des autres.

4. Pour l'élection du Catholicos de Sis, on dit qu'elle doit être réglée par négociations directes entre le Ministre de la Justice et des Cultes et le Patriarche, sur les bases de Règles en vigueur et de l'usage *ab antiquo*.

5. On déclare que les subventions des Eglises et des écoles incendiées ou ruinées et pour le soulagement des indigents sont chose décidée déjà en principe.

On fait observer que ces pertes ne concernent pas exclusivement les Arméniens et que les Musulmans, eux aussi, ont subi des dommages dans leurs mosquées et leurs écoles, et que c'est pour cette raison que la Commission de Secours a été partagée en deux sections. Pour le moment la Commission doit faire les enquêtes nécessaires pour préciser et évaluer les pertes et les dommages tant des Musulmans que des Arméniens, fixer les sommes nécessaires pour réparer les pertes soit des uns, soit des autres, et subvenir aux besoins des familles indigentes et des orphelins. C'est après cela seulement que le Trésor de l'Etat versera dans la Caisse de la Commission de Secours les sommes nécessaires pour ces dépenses. En attendant, la Commission doit continuer ses opérations.

No. 73.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 135.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 107 of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut, reporting the election of a new Greek Catholic Patriarch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Consul-General Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Beirout, February 28, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 10 of the 9th February, I have the honour to report that Bishop Cyrus Jureyiri (Cyrus, an abbot of Deir), Greek Catholic Patriarch at the convocation of Bishops at Sarka on the 24th instant.

The rival candidate, Bishop Kirulos Jeha, of Aleppo, was secretly supported by the Government and the Papal Delegate, but a large majority of the Greek Catholic community were in favour of Jureyiri.

The new Patriarch is about 57 years of age, and a native of Zahlé, Mount Lebanon. He is distinguished for great energy and zeal, and has rendered valuable services to the Greek Catholic cause in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DEVEY-SIMMONDS-HAY.

No. 74.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 136.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reviewing the career of Shemshi Pasha since his appointment as Vali of Van, and setting forth the considerations which render his dismissal desirable.

Since that despatch was written, Shemshi Pasha has been dismissed, and Tahir Pasha, formerly Vali of Mosul, has been appointed to succeed him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 74.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Van, February 14, 1898.*

IN reply to a question in your Excellency's telegram of the 9th February, I telegraphed urging Shemshi Pasha's immediate dismissal.

Lest I should appear inconsistent in this matter, I beg to lay before your Excellency the considerations by which I have all along been guided.

There is no doubt that Shemshi Pasha's firm conduct last summer saved the whole province from most serious danger owing at that time to the attempts of Lekki Pasha to get him dismissed and disgraced, he found himself obliged to rely on the Consuls for support. Although Lekki Pasha was unable to procure his dismissal he deprived him of his military command, and, by his intrigues with the Kurds, perpetually thwarted and harassed him.

It seemed to occur to Shemshi Pasha after a while that the Consuls could do no more for him, and that by allowing himself to appear to be guided by them, he displayed a want of dignity and patriotism.

Being a man of an obstinate and childish disposition, and not particularly experienced or intelligent, it was necessary for him to fall under the influence of some one. As is natural with such characters, the persons who obtained this influence over him were those who were ready to flatter him and appear to approve of whatever he did, while in reality they were making him their tool. Those who ventured to oppose or remonstrate with him found him more and more difficult to deal with, and latterly have been obliged to stand aside altogether.

The evil effects of this were more particularly to be remarked in his dealings with the Armenian people, after all real danger from the revolutionists had passed away. In fact, it is his conduct in this respect that has brought matters to a crisis.

In my despatch No. 49 of 1897 I had the honour to report to your Excellency a series of arrests carried out with great brutality at the instance of the police. It was at this time that the Alaï Bey, Izzat, and the then 3rd Commissary of Police, Husin, whose dismissal I have begged your Excellency to insist on, first came to my notice in their true characters.

Some few revolutionists still remained in hiding in the gardens, and their presence afforded the police an excellent means of raising money and of gratifying personal enmity.

A charge of assisting these men brought by the police sufficed to insure the committal to prison of any Armenian who was not disposed to pay for his liberty.

From time to time arrests were made, and though in some instances the representations of my French colleague and myself were successful in procuring the liberty of some of the unfortunates, the bulk of the accused remained, and, in spite of all promises made to us, they were not brought to trial.

I have reported to your Excellency in my despatch No. 2 of 1898 the circumstances attending the death of Dikran Diroyan and his two companions, and the infamous part played therein by the Alaï Bey and 2nd Commissaire.

The men killed were prominent revolutionists, and it was hoped after this that as there was no further excuse to continue harassing the people that better times might be expected.

This was, however, far from being the case. The brutal treatment of Dikran Diroyan's sister, the girl Larooin (mentioned in my despatch No. 2), convinced me that Shemshi Pasha was too far gone under the influence of his bad advisers for any further good to be expected of him.

The police continued charging various Armenians with having assisted or harboured the dead men or their associates.

About thirty summonses were recently issued, and, among other prominent members of the Armenian community to whom they have been served, is the Murakhas of Van, Stopan Vartabed. He had annoyed the police by reporting them for extorting money from poor villagers who had come into the city to beg. An Armenian police constable had the insolence to threaten him openly with what he might expect for his behaviour in the matter.

The trial of thirty-three Armenians on charges of belonging to revolutionary Societies concluded on the 9th, but the Court have not yet decided as to their finding.

My French and Russian colleagues and I determined to watch the proceedings, the more so as an attempt was made to hurry them to a conclusion before we were aware that the trial had commenced.

I will not here touch upon the conduct of Hamdi Bey, the Public Prosecutor, or of the trial itself.

Shemshi Pasha, however, when he heard what the Consuls were doing, sent for the President and members of the Court; ordered them to inflict a severe punishment on all the prisoners, and threatened them with various penalties if they refused.

I took means to assure the members of the Court that they had nothing to fear if they did their duty.

The more respectable officials now hold themselves as much as possible aloof from the Acting Governor-General, whose conduct on finding himself thwarted daily more resembles that of a mad man.

There are too many elements of trouble and danger here for such a state of affairs to be safe.

Shemshi Pasha, when in his right mind, is honest and kind hearted. His disgrace

will be a triumph for the Mushir, Lekki Pasha, whose evil intentions he courageously frustrated, and whose prestige suffered considerably as long as Shemshi Pasha remained in Van, in spite of his efforts to have him removed.

It is with regret and reluctance, therefore, remembering as I do the good services rendered by Shemshi Pasha at a critical time, that I have asked your Excellency to urge his immediate dismissal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. [illegible]

No. 75.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 137.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1898.

IN my despatch No. 770 of the 24th November, 1897, I reported the departure of Dr. Hepworth, a correspondent of the "New York Herald," on a mission of inquiry into the causes and effects of the recent massacres in Asia Minor.

Dr. Hepworth returned some time since from his tour, in the course of which he visited Trebizond, Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, and other centres of disturbance.

I have not hitherto troubled your Lordship with his letters to the press, which, though written with considerable impartiality and fairness, have not added very materially to our knowledge. The inclosed cutting from the Paris edition of the "New York Herald," however, may be worth perusal, as showing the general result of his investigations. Writing from Bitlis Dr. Hepworth places on record his belief that, though fanaticism undoubtedly fanned the flame, the true origin of the conflict must be sought in the natural and inveterate antagonism between Kurds and Armenians, who are distinguished from each other not so much by religious differences as by irreconcilable habits of daily life, the roving Kurdish "robber baron" regarding the sedentary trading Armenian as his natural prey. For centuries a kind of *modus vivendi* had been established between them by means of blackmail; but when the Turkish tax-gatherer appeared upon the scene and appropriated the portion till then set aside to purchase protection from the Kurd, the Armenian villager was left defenceless, and, on the first sign of revolt, crushed without mercy.

Dr. Hepworth acquits the Sultan of having directly ordered the massacres, but he accuses him of culpable ignorance of what passes in the provinces of his Empire, and thinks that he yielded to a momentary panic, and gave orders for the repression of an imaginary rebellion, of which the Kurdish population availed themselves to reduce their neighbours to absolute subjection.

Dr. Hepworth's view that inveterate antagonism has always existed between the Kurds and Armenians is entirely contrary to that held by the present Armenian Patriarch, who observed to me a few days ago that there was no natural hostility between the two races, which were much intermixed in blood, and had lived side-by-side for many centuries. The real difference was between the men of the hills and the men of the plains irrespective of nationality, and the enmity which had grown up between them during the last few years was the work of the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Extract from the Paris Edition of the "New York Herald."

NOW I do not believe that the Sultan knows very much about these massacres, or about the condition of this Kurd country. I have good reasons for making the assertion. He lives a life of perfect seclusion, never visits his provinces, never goes further than his own garden, and every atom of news is filtered through a palace clique, who have various personal interests at stake. He cannot help believing what he hears, or what certain people choose to tell him, and it is impossible for him to verify any statement made, for official documents are very frequently full of fables.

Let me illustrate. Sekki Pasha believed, or is alleged to have believed, that the Sassoun district was full of Revolutionists, thousands of them. The Turk is peculiar in that he becomes panic-stricken at the slightest cause, or without any cause. This is a notorious fact. Under such circumstances, when the news came to the Sultan's ear, he would naturally telegraph an order to put the rebellion down, being ignorant that there was no rebellion to be put down. The troops arrived and began their work. Houses were looted, and such crimes were committed that women threw themselves into the river rather than submit to dishonour. When the panic was over, it was discovered that there were in reality only two Revolutionists in the place, and that all the mischief was done in consequence of some one's wild imaginings. That is a page of true history, and it contains a key to the situation.

When I was at a certain village some nights ago, the Armenian Episcopos of Bagazid paid me a visit. He had ridden on horseback four days in order to meet me. The Governor of the Bayazid district is Colonel Djebar Bey. Bayazid was saved from serious disaster by the efficiency of this Colonel. What did he do? When he saw what was going on he got on the track of the Revolutionists, caught them and sent them to prison, where they are to this day. But for that act, there would have been a massacre in Bayazid perhaps equal to the Sassoun calamity. In that one case, at least, the right steps were taken, namely, the guilty were punished and the innocent were saved. Why could not that have been done in every other portion of Anatolia? Why engulph in misery and ruin a whole people, as has been done, because a few scoundrels came over from the Russian or the Persian border to incite the community to revolt? That is the crime of Turkey.

Unless these Kurds are restrained, and made amenable to the laws of the land, there is still further trouble in store. Fourteen destroyed villages were re-established by foreign charity, and the Armenians there set on their feet again. Cattle were given to them, and they had a comparatively bright prospect. But on the 14th October, the Kurds swooped down and drove off nearly all their live stock, and left them as badly off as ever. What hope is there for a people who are subject to such outrages? And if the Kurds are being protected from the consequences of their crimes, what is to become of the country, for though the Kurd prefers to steal from an Armenian, he has no compunction against stealing from a Turk?

The situation, you see, is very different, and much worse south of the mountains.

No. 76.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 138.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1898.

HER Majesty's Consul at Jeddah reports, by telegraph, the release of thirty-seven Harb prisoners, and the arrival of 2,000 troops at that place from Constantinople.

Mr. Devey also states that a rumour is current, though hitherto unconfirmed, that the Emir of the Nejd has been assassinated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 77.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 141.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the threats used by Shemshi Pasha against the Armenians to induce them to give up the man Dikran Diroyan, and the subsequent intervention of the Russian Vice-Consul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)

Sir, *Van, February* 18, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to return herewith the inclosure to your despatch of the 29th January, from the Armenian Patriarch.

I have already reported to your Excellency in my despatches Nos. 2, 5, and 6 of 1898, and telegrams during January and February the facts that seemed noteworthy.

As regards Shemshi Pasha's threats to the Armenian people of consequences that could ensue if Dikran Diroyan were not delivered up. I regarded these as bluster that he would not dare to put into execution. It did not, therefore, appear necessary to trouble your Excellency with a relation of these and other matters that did not appear to be of general importance.

The Russian Vice-Consul, who is merely acting here and new to the place, appeared to consider that these threats demanded his intervention.

A certain amount of friction ensued from his representations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 78.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 142.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the Russian Vice-Consul there, now absent on leave, and his substitute.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 78.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9. Confidential.)

Sir, *Van, February* 18, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following for your Excellency's consideration.

The Russian Vice-Consul, M. Minouski, is away in Tiflis on sick leave, and his place is occupied temporarily by M. Hippnis, Vice-Consul at Riza, near Trebizond.

M. Minouski, though personally most amiable, was, from the point of view of business, very undesirable. He had a terrible fear of responsibility, and his word was not to be relied on.

He expect to be treated by his Embassy with great consideration. He used to pretend that he was a civilian, but the impression is very strong that he is a soldier.

Dr. Hippnis appears the very contrary of his colleague.

He was in the Guard Artillery, but left the army some eleven years ago and took to the Consular career. He appears to be a man of ability and decision. He speaks French well, and has had some experience of the country.

His first act was to dismiss the military guard in the Russian Vice-Consulate, with the remark that if a Consul required such protection, what was the look-out for the people.

M. Hippnis' reason for intervention in Armenian affairs is, as he states, briefly this:—

"The Caucasus is full of refugee Armenians, most of them destitute and a burden on the country. The Government desires to get them back to their homes in Turkey, and the Governor-General of the Caucasus proposes spending money collected for Armenian relief in enabling refugees to return to their homes. If persecution of Armenians continues in Turkey, instead of being able to get rid of the surplus Armenians a fresh influx may certainly be expected."

I cannot help thinking, however, that the chief reason for getting rid of Armenians—who are most thrifty and industrious, and would probably make excellent colonists—is that most of them hold political opinions, and have a desire for liberty that is not in accordance with Russian ideas on such subjects. There is no doubt, also, that they are a somewhat troublesome people to govern.

The following opinions held by M. Hippnis, and also, I believe, by M. Minouski, may be of interest:—

"The late massacres of Armenians was a masterly stroke of policy on the part of the Sultan's Government, because, owing to their pretensions and the readiness of foreign Ambassadors to espouse their cause, they were becoming a serious menace to the safety of the State. They are now, however, completely crushed, and will be unable for many years to lift their heads again."

"Should armed bands of Armenians again kill Turks, no one can blame the latter if they retaliate by wholesale massacres of Armenians. The Embassies will be unable to interfere.

"It cannot be expected that those who have once embraced Islam should be allowed to return to Christianity, because even in Russia those who have once accepted the Orthodox faith are not allowed to abandon it."

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 79.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 143.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the reported reassembly of Armenian Revolutionists at Selmas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Van, February* 18, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to return herewith the inclosure received in your Excellency's despatch of the 2nd February.*

There are rumours here, as I have already notified your Excellency, that the Armenian Revolutionists are again assembling in Selmas. The Turkish Consul at Khoi reported that they were led by an English officer.

An Armenian letter, that does not appear very accurate in details, states that an Englishman with a name that is pronounced here like "Bissin" is among them at Selmas.

Whether true or not, this report as to the presence of an Englishman has an unfortunate effect, the more so as the Russian subject Paramas Paramasian, a Hunt chakist leader, stated here in Court that the orders to undertake the enterprise of last August came from the Hunt chakist Committee in London.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

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* Mr. C. Hardinge's despatch to Armenian Atrocities, February 2, No. 173, December 31, 1897.

No. 80.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 141.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis respecting the formation of new nahiés for administrative purposes in the Mush Plain, and the appointment of Kurds in the place of Christians as Mudirs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Acting Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Bitlis, February 14, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, according to a scheme elaborated by the late Mufti and the ex-Mutessarif of Mush, all Christian Mudirs in the nahiés of the Mush Plain have been relieved of their functions.

New nahiés have been formed for administrative purposes, and all the larger Christian villages, including Hasskeni, Dergevank, Havadorik, Mogunk, Chirigh, Sorkhum, Nurshen, Arinjvank, Arendj, Alizolum, Tertagh, Aragh, and others, situated near Mush and within a radius of three hours distance, have been amalgamated with Mush, and have now no separate Mudir.

The smaller Christian villages scattered in the plain have been united to the Kurdish villages nearest to them in the mountains on the north and south of the plain. By this means the Kurdish population is made to preponderate in each nahié, and Kurdish Mudirs have been appointed accordingly. They are already engaged in the exercise of their duties.

The Christian members of the Administrative Council of Mush have also been changed, and two Armenian representatives of the lowest class and least influence chosen to replace them.

It would thus appear that the authorities are taking advantage of the provisions of the Reform Scheme relating to the formation of new nahiés, to conclude arrangements which cannot be otherwise than detrimental to the interests of the Christian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

No. 81.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 147.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 10, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Graves, Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, relating to the Baïram festivals.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 81.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, February 24, 1898.*

WITH reference to my preceding despatch, I have the honour to report that, thanks to the precautions taken in consequence of the instructions of the Minister of War, the Bairam festival has passed without any disturbance whatever.

The Armenian police officer, Dikran Effendi, who was accused of insulting the Mussulman faith, has been sent under escort to Constantinople.

I had the honour to report the substance of the above to your Excellency by telegraph to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 82.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 154.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 12, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem respecting the arrest and banishment of the Mufti of Gaza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 82.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, March 1, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Mufti of Gaza, Hanafi Effendi, his brother Abdel Hai, and his son Ahmed Aref, were on the 17th ultimo arrested by orders from the Governor of Jerusalem, taken to Jaffa, and shipped on board the Messageries Maritimes steamer, which sailed from that port on the 18th ultimo. Their destination is not positively known, but they are supposed to be exiled to Rhodes, Angora, or Konieh.

The motive for this step on the part of the Turkish authorities is stated to have been mistrust of the power and influence which of recent years the Mufti had acquired in Gaza, but more especially among the Bedouins of the surrounding district, as, besides being a very strict and fanatical Mussulman, he was related to one of the oldest families in Jerusalem, the Housseinis, who are very wealthy and own a considerable amount of landed property. Secret intrigues carried on at Constantinople by some of the rival Mahommedan families, who had become jealous of the influence of the Mufti of Gaza, have no doubt contributed much towards his downfall, but the summary manner in which he was arrested and banished from the country has produced an unfavourable impression on a large section of the native Mahommedan population in Jerusalem.

I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consular Agent Amzalak, and an extract from a private letter which I have received from Gaza giving some further details with reference to this incident.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 82.

Mr. Amzalak to Consul Dickson.

(No. 9.)
M, le Consul, *Jaffa, le 23 Février.*, 1898.

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que Vendredi dernier, 18 courant, le Mufti de Gaza, son frère Abdel Hay, et le fils du Mufti, Ahmed Aref, famille oligarchique à Gaza, sont arrivés ici escortés par le Bimbachi de la gendarmerie et plusieurs gendarmes; ils furent transportés à bord du bateau des Messageries, qui se trouvait ce même jour-là dans notre port; pour être envoyés à leur place d'exil, qui est, je crois, Angora ou Konieh.

Veuillez &c.
(Signé) H. AMZALAK.

Inclosure 3 in No. 82.

Letter addressed to Mr. Consul Dickson, dated, C. M. S., Gaza, February 26, 1898.

(Extract.)

THE Mufti, Abdul Hai, his brother, and the son of the former, were arrested one night during Ramadan. There had been quarrels between them and the Kaimakam's party, bitter, and long contested, and each party was bringing charges against the other to those in authority.

A reason that has been given to me privately is that the Khedive hopes to come to El Arish on the 15th of Shawal, and for fear of intrigue they were sent out of the way, as the Mufti has influence over a large section of the Arabs.

They were also thwarting the Kaimakam and those in authority in every possible way, and oppressing the poor.

The son of the Mufti, Ahmed Arif, was the head of the thieves.

Though they were never friendly to us, of late Abdul Hai has talked much in favour of the English; therefore, the night they were arrested a guard of soldiers was set at both gates of the compound lest they took shelter here.

No. 83.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 159.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 14, 1898.

IN my despatch No. 93, Confidential of the 14th ultimo, I had the honour to report to your Lordship the representations made by me at the Sublime Porte with regard to the alleged murder of three Armenian revolutionists at Van and the exile to Tripoli in Barbary of the sister of one of them, together with the account given of the matter by the Minister of the Interior, which account was also communicated to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, for his information.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a letter which I have received from the Armenian Revolutionary Federation known as the "Dashnaktsutium" soliciting the intervention of Her Majesty's Embassy on behalf of the woman in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Armenian Revolutionary Federation to Sir P. Currie.

Excellence, *Comité Central de Constantinople, le* 8 *Mars*, 1898.

VOUS etes déjà au courant des derniers événements déroulés à Van.

On espérait à tort que les représailles prendraient fin après la mort de notre regretté Figrat Déroyan, dont la présence dans la ville avait fourni au Gouvernement le prétexte à de nouvelles persécutions contre les Arméniens.

Et c'est avec une vive indignation que nous apprenons l'acte infâme par lequel le Gouvernement médite de se venger sur Mlle. Zaroubi Déroyan, de tous les embarras et échecs qui lui ont été infligés par son vaillant frère.

La pauvre jeune fille a été condamnée à la réclusion perpétuelle dans la forteresse de Tripoli de Barbarie. Elle est déjà en route.

En portant ce fait à la connaissance de votre Excellence nous n'insistons plus davantage. Nous en appelons à vos sentiments d'humanité pour arracher la vie d'un innocent aux horreurs d'une détention si barbare, pour sauver l'honneur d'une jeune fille des griffes de ses justiciers farouches, dont il est inutile de signaler à votre Excellence les instincts sauvages.

No. 84.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 165. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 16, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, respecting the general situation in the Vilayet of Konieh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Vice-Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8. Confidential.)
Sir, *Angora, March* 10, 1898.

IN view of the despatches which I received from time to time during last year from Mr. Vice-Consul Keun, and which were forwarded by me to your Excellency, reporting the existence of an anti-Christian feeling among the Mussulmans of Konieh, I have the honour to report that, taking advantage of my recent stay in that town, I made various inquiries into the matter with a view of informing your Excellency how far such feeling might still be said to continue.

The result of my inquiries as well as of my own personal observation, led me to conclude that the situation, at all events for the moment, is fairly satisfactory, and that unless the authorities of that town are culpably negligent in their duty there would seem to be little fear of any serious molestation of the Christians on the part of their Mussulman fellow-townsmen. It was, in fact, pointed out to me during my stay in the town in question, that all through the critical period through which the country has recently been passing, the state of things had, on the whole, been remarkably quiet: on one occasion only, viz., shortly after the events at Caesarea in November 1895, could a disturbance have been said to be imminent. Even this, I was told, was the work of one or two persons only, who, desirous of provoking a massacre for reasons of their own, had deliberately circulated among the Mussulmans while at Mosque the monstrous report that the wives and children of the latter were being murdered by the Christians. The authorities, however, appear to have acted with promptitude and energy, and the danger was thus fortunately averted.

It is, of course, impossible to expect that in a town such as Konieh, where the Mussulmans number as they do some 37,000 as against some 5,500 Christians only, a feeling of uneasiness and insecurity should not at times prevail among the latter, especially during periods of great excitement, such as those above referred to; and this feeling no doubt is augmented in case of threats, or of individual assaults by Mussulmans, such as those which were brought to my notice by Mr Keun, and reported by me to your Excellency in my despatches Nos. 42 and 50 of the 27th

April and 18th May of last year respectively. Nevertheless, without wishing to minimize these occurrences, the gravity of which depends greatly upon the attitude assumed towards them by the local authorities, I am inclined to think, after personal observations of the demeanour of the Konieh Mussulmans towards their fellow-townsmen the Christians, that they are rather isolated instances of individual ill-will than of manifestations on the part of the Mussulmans as a body. It is only right to add that the comparative tranquillity which, as I had the honour to point out above, has been enjoyed by the Konieh Christians, has been largely due to the late Vali Ali Kemal Pasha, and to Aziz Tchelebi, the Grand Master of the Dervishes in that town, both liberal-minded men who, I was told, uniformly exerted their influence throughout the troubles to restrain the more fanatical of their co-religionists, and to calm the fears of the Christians.

In another respect, moreover, I am able to report to your Excellency a slight improvement in the situation, in this case more particularly affecting the Armenian part of the population. The vexatious restrictions which, after the bomb-throwing incident at Constantinople in August of last year, were imposed upon the movements of the latter from one part of the vilayet to another, have, I was informed by Mr. Keun, been greatly relaxed. I was, however, unable to ascertain whether this was in consequence of orders from the Central Government, or was due to the discretion exercised by the local authorities themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 85.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 21.)

(No. 106.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 16, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to report the appointments of Tahir Pasha as Vali of Van, Ferid Bey as Vali of Konieh, Enis Pasha as Vali of Basrah, and Bahri Pasha as Vali of Adana.

The first is a civilian of Albanian origin, of about 50 years of age. He began his public career as "Mektubji" at Salonica, after which he became Vali of Mosul. He seems to have done well in that capacity, and the French Embassy speak highly of his capabilities. It is unlikely, however, that he will succeed at Van, which is one of the most difficult vilayets to administer in the Empire, since he is not a man of much force of character or initiative.

Ferid Bey is also an Albanian, connected with the family of the famous Ali Pasha of Janina, and is regarded at this Embassy as a well-meaning and conscientious official, of some force of character, but of little administrative experience. He has been a member of the Council of State.

[illegible] appointment, as it is one of the most tranquil vilayets in the Empire.

The other appointments call for more comment. Enis Pasha is a native of Salonica, and after being Mutessarif of Mardin was first Acting Vali of Diarbekir, and then confirmed in the post. He was considered by both the British and French Consuls to have deliberately brought about the massacres which took place at Diarbekir on the 1st November, 1895. He not only paid no attention to the representations of the French Consul, who pointed out the danger of the situation, but even refused his request to send a guard to protect a Convent of Capuchins, and did not prevent the Kurds from attacking the French Consulate.

The complaints of the French Embassy had at first no effect, but at last, in November, [illegible] Enis Pasha was dismissed at the request of M. Cambon and myself. I fear that as he is supported by the Grand Vizier there is little chance of cancelling his nomination to Basrah, but as Great Britain has special interests in that vilayet, I have thought it right to represent to Tewfik Pasha that the appointment of so notorious a functionary cannot fail to have a deplorable effect, and may bring about strained relations between the British and Ottoman authorities in the Persian Gulf.

The new Vali of Adana, Bahri Pasha, is a member of the great Kurdish family of Ala-ed-Din, Beys of Khinis, and has even a worse record than Enis Pasha. He

was Mutessarif of Pera and of Scutari in Asia, from both of which posts he was expelled for gross malpractices. In Pera he was in league with the keepers of gambling-houses, from whom he received a regular tribute. He is a relative of the notorious Kurd, Moussa Bey, and when the latter was summoned to Constantinople for trial in 1889 he entertained him in his house, and assisted him in every way. He has also been Mutessarif of Prishtina, Denizli, and Jerusalem. In 1894 he was appointed Vali of Kharput, but owing to the representations of the German Ambassador the appointment was cancelled. I have endeavoured to ascertain if my colleagues are disposed to protest against the appointment, but they do not seem inclined to take any active steps, and the Armenian Patriarch states that his community have no particular apprehensions respecting Bahri Pasha. In Kurdistan he would no doubt be a dangerous official, as he would certainly protect all his tribe, and allow them to commit every kind of excess with impunity; but he speaks Armenian fluently, and is believed to be, like many Kurds, not unfriendly to the Armenians. Though exceedingly corrupt and venal, he is not wanting in vigour and determination, and is correct in his behaviour towards the foreign Consuls, with whom he has generally been on good terms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 86.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 21.)

(No. 109.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 17, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 135 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the election of a Greek Catholic Patriarch of Antioch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 86.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Damascus, March* 3, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of the 17th July, 1897, reporting the death of his Beatitude Gregorios Yussuf I. the Greek Catholic Patriarch, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Bishops assembled in Synod, in the Convent of Sarba, near Beyrout, have elected Mgr. Butros Geragiri, Bishop of Banias (Caesarea Philippi), to the vacant Patriarchal Throne. It would appear that Mgr. Geragiri's election has, though with some difficulty, been sanctioned by the Pope, and, therefore, approved by the French Government, it only remains now that the choice should receive the final and official confirmation of the Sultan.

I am given to understand that the successful candidate is no great favourite in the local official Turkish world, on account of a certain hastiness and impetuosity of character, and a tendency to take action even in matters of considerable importance without duly reflecting on the possible results of his conduct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 87.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 72.)
Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 25, 1898, 5·30 P.M.*

I HEAR that the authorities at Aleppo have issued a public notice ordering the Reserves to hold themselves in readiness to be called out on emergency.

This information reached me yesterday by telegraph from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo.

No. 88.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 170.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 26, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 91 of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, containing details respecting the collection of taxes in the Caza of Kharput.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 88.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8. Confidential.)
Sir, *Kharput, February 24, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to submit, for the information of your Excellency, the following statistics (which I believe to be correct) of a portion of the taxes collected in this district subsequent to the disturbances:—

The total of taxes claimed at Mezreh for the Turkish financial year 1313, i.e., from March 1897 to March 1898, figures at 98,598 piastres, of which the Mussulmans pay only 16,400 piastres; 12,037 piastres had been paid by the Christians before the beginning of last month, leaving a balance of 10,161 piastres to their credit. The latter sum comprises 16,000 piastres due from Armenians who have emigrated or moved after the troubles, and from indigent widows and orphans; 8,000 piastres owed by Armenian officials who might pay at once, and a residue of 17,161 piastres, which will with difficulty be collected before the end of 1313. It may thus be observed that the taxes claimed from the Mezreh Armenians are six times as great as those levied from the Moslems, although the former are, it appears, only 50 per cent. more numerous.

I have received a list in Turkish of sixty-three villages in this neighbourhood which were nearly all plundered, and many of them burned, together with the arrears of taxes claimed for the twelve years 1300–1312, and the arrears actually levied therein, after the disturbances, during the Turkish year 1312. The total of arrears demanded figured at 1,252,861 piastres, of which 751,164 piastres were paid, viz., considerably more than one-half.

The inclosed sample list of plundered villages specifying the number of houses destroyed, the arrears claimed and the arrears extorted in each, may suffice to show how the villagers, after being plundered and in many cases left homeless, have been driven to sell their harvests and even their bedding—when not forcibly confiscated—in order to meet the collectors' demands. Thirteen years' arrears were claimed, notwithstanding plunder, destruction of property, murder of bread-winners, removal of families and the loss of "Kochans" or receipts for taxes paid during that period.

In the village of Tadem—mentioned in the inclosed list—48,000 piastres arrears were being pressed for two months ago by five zaptiehs and a zabit, who lived—they and their horses—at the villagers' expense. A leading Armenian there had, however, preserved receipts proving that 6,500 piastres only remained owing by the entire village. He brought the receipts to the Konak, but was informed that the

register containing the entry of taxes levied at Tadem had been lost; but, by bribing a certain functionary, he succeeded in effecting the discovery of the register which testified to the validity of his receipts, and the claim was consequently reduced from 48,000 piastres to 6,500 piastres. In many other villages absurd claims have been enforced by four or five zaptiehs, whose chief source of livelihood has lain in the extortion of taxes from defenceless Armenians. The tax-collectors at Ereghi, Morenik, Kessrik, Husseinik, and Sorsori was intrusted to soldiers—afterwards withdrawn.

The names of fourteen plundered villages in the Caza of Chemish-Ghesek, from which Bedel-i-Askeri is being collected, were recently communicated to me, and the Vali, upon my representation, said that he would write and ascertain whether those villages had or had not been plundered. But he took no energetic action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 88.

Plundered Villages.	Number of Houses.	Number of Houses burned.	Total Arrears claimed.	Taxes levied during 1312.
			Piastres.	Piastres.
Sor on	166	150	27,000	22,374
				1,041
Tadem	260	200	48,000	including tax for 1312
				23,021
Coyulu	100	55	62,744	15,261
Bismishan	266	260	83,564	15,908
Morenik	98	10	60,000	

No. 89.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 173.) *Constantinople, March 21, 1898.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the recrudescence among the Mussulmans of hostility to Christians in that region, and reporting as to certain officials whose removal is desirable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.) *Van, February 28, 1898.*
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that there appears to be a fresh outburst of ill-feeling among the lower Mahommedans against the Christians. Armenians have been threatened, and one man, whom I consider trustworthy, told me that he was secretly warned by a Turk that there would shortly be a massacre. This Turk assisted some Armenians before the events of June 1896.

Threats are said to have been uttered against the Consuls. I attribute this irritation to the steps taken by the Consuls with regard to the trial of the Armenian political prisoners, and the consequent humiliation of the authorities.

Massacre is a sufficiently common topic of conversation here, but unless the authorities are willing, the Mahommedans, however disposed, will not venture to disturb the peace.

Of this there appears to be no doubt whatever. No one here questions the fact that the massacre of June 1896 was deliberately organized by Zekki Pasha, Mushir of Erzingian, and Saad-ud-Din Pasha, Ferik in Van.

The order maintained throughout this vilayet last summer, when the Mahommedans were greatly irritated and alarmed, is a convincing proof of the perfect ability of the Government to maintain security when so disposed.

I suspect that a section of the officials here are desirous of bringing on another massacre, but unless they have the support and concurrence of the military authorities they can do very little.

The General Officer Commanding the division here denies the rumours that six battalions are coming to Van in spring, and that all classes of the Reserve are to be called out, or that there is any reason for disquietude regarding Armenian revolutionists on the frontier, or for any other reason whatever.

The Ferik, Munir Pasha, is honest and kindly, but is old, and has no energy or ability. The General of Brigade, Husni Pasha, who came here from Sivas last autumn, and is, I believe, a partisan of Zekki Pasha, can, in my opinion, pretty well have his own way in military matters. He appears to be able and energetic.

The removal of the following officials would be highly desirable:—

Acting Vali	Shemshi Pasha.
Public Prosecutor	Hamdi Bey.
Alai Bey	Izzet Bey.
Second Commissary of Police	Husni Effendi.
Bash Mudir of Posts and Telegraphs	Hassan Tahsin Effendi.
Turkish Consul in Khoi	Ali Reza Bey.

The late Mayor of Van, Ghalib Pasha, and the present Mayor, Hassan Pasha, are largely concerned in stirring up the blackguard Mahommedan element on every opportunity. The former caused 160 Armenians who had fled for refuge to his house in June 1896, to be taken out after he had afforded them asylum for two or three days, and butchered in cold blood.

I do not suspect Shemshi Pasha of wishing to work on the fanatical feelings of the mob, but with the many possibilities of trouble that exist here, a cool, capable, and strong man is most essential as Vali.

The Armenian people live in peril, and unless proper measures are taken, more particularly with regard to the Kurds, there is little hope for their future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 90.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 175.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 23, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput. The first of these despatches deals with the case of an Armenian named Hadji Agop Gharibian, who was arrested by order of the Court of Cassation after acquittal by the ordinary Tribunal. In his second despatch Mr. Fontana gives particulars respecting the case of two Armenian political prisoners who were sent from Kharput to Mosul for trial.

Acting on my instructions Mr. Stavrides addressed Memoranda in Turkish on both these cases to the Minister of Justice. His Excellency replied that the procedure which was being followed had been ordered by a decree of the Court of Cassation, and that he could not interfere. However, he ordered a telegram to be sent to Mosul, urging the immediate trial and settlement of the case of the two Armenians.

Both the Minister and chief officials of the Ministry of Justice gave unsatisfactory explanations of the reasons which induced the Court of Cassation to order Gharibian's second trial. In connection with the latter case, Mr. Stavrides called on the First Procureur-Général, who promised to find the decree of the Court of Cassation, and to communicate to Her Majesty's Embassy the decisions of that Tribunal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 90.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Kharput, February 7, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for the consideration of your Excellency, the following case involving a point of law, which would appear to have been either misinterpreted or ignored by the Court of Cassation at Constantinople.

An Armenian named Hadji Agob Aga Gharibian, native of Kara-Hissar, in the Vilayet of Sivas, was last year arrested and tried, together with five other men, for the murder of Mahmoud Nejib Effendi, Muavin of the Procureur-Général for that district, and of the zaptieh Abdullah Chaoush. The five men in question confessed, in the course of their trial at Sivas, that they were the real criminals, and judgment was accordingly passed upon them, Hadji Agob being at the same time acquitted by the Tribunal and set at liberty. Three days later, moreover, the convicts referred to as having confessed their crime were also released in virtue of the general amnesty granted by the Sultan to Armenian political offenders.

The Court of Cassation subsequently decided, upon revision of the case, that Hadji Agob had been illegally acquitted in view of the evidence afforded during the trial as to his having used threatening language with regard to Mahmoud Nejib Effendi prior to the latter's assassination. And they referred their "Karar" or decision, dated the 4th Eyloul, 1313 (3rd August, 1897) annulling the verdict of "Not Guilty" pronounced by the Sivas Court, to the Criminal Court of Maamouret-ul-Aziz with instructions for Agob Gharibian to be conveyed thither under arrest from Kara-Hissar, and retried at Kharput, where he has now remained in prison awaiting a fresh trial for several months past. The real offenders, however, who were released under the amnesty, have not been further molested.

If I am correctly informed as to the facts above set forth the rearrest of Hadji Agob can scarcely fail to be both illogical and illegal. Had he been found guilty by the Court at Sivas he would have escaped punishment, nevertheless, under the amnesty accorded to the acknowledged authors of the crime; but the very fact of his having been acquitted of participation therein seems to have excluded him from fruition of that amnesty, and to have conduced, in fact, to his rearrest. Article No. 315 of the Ottoman Criminal Code provides that, in the event of the innocence of the accused, the Procureur-Général may demand annulment of the "Ilam" containing the acquittal solely with a view to insuring correct legal procedure ("Kanonin Husni Jeriani"), but on condition that the acquittal shall not be affected thereby. And according to Article No. 294 of the same Code, "A person acquitted by law of the offence imputed to him shall not again be imprisoned, arrested for, or charged with that same offence."

The Court of Cassation, in thus causing the rearrest and renewed trial of Agob Gharibian upon a charge of which he had once been declared guiltless by a competent Court, may be considered to have acted in direct contravention of the above Articles, as well as in defiance of the amnesty promulgated by the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 90.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Kharput, February 26, 1898.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 19th, and my telegrams of the 5th and 25th instant, relative to the case of two Armenian political prisoners who have now been sent from Kharput to Mosul for trial, I have the honour to submit the following particulars, derived from a well-informed acquaintance in this town, which may serve to throw further light upon the case in question.

Nearly a year ago a house at Mardin, occupied by an Armenian watchmaker named Kirkor and his son Avedis, was entered and searched by the police. Certain compromising newspapers appear to have been discovered there, as well as a few

business letters addressed to Kirkor by Bagdasar and Fezji Nigöos, of Kharput, with whom the watchmaker had for long past held commercial dealings. Kirkor and his son were immediately afterwards imprisoned, and without waiting for the said letters' translation the Mustantik at Mardin dispatched to Kharput a warrant* (dated the 11th (28th) June, 1897) for the "temporary arrest" of Nigöos and Bagdasar.

The two men were thereupon apprehended, and remained in prison for eight months, without "Istintak" or trial, up to the date of their departure, under police escort, for Mosul some eighteen days ago.

The result of the inquiry made by the Mustantik at Mardin into the charge preferred against Kirkor and Avedis was sent by the Public Prosecutor at Diarbekir under cover, dated the 4th (16th) June, 1897) to the Ministry of Justice, and there referred to the Court of Cassation, whose decision (dated the 2nd September), decreeing that the case should be tried at Mosul, was communicated to the Judicial authorities of that town.

Article No. 89 of the Ottoman Criminal Code specifies that a warrant for temporary arrest shall only extend to thirty days' detention, and that no person arrested under such a warrant shall be detained for more than thirty days without undergoing an "Istintak"—examination by the Mustantik or Juge d'Instruction.

Nigöos and Bagdasar, during their eight months' imprisonment, complained to the local authorities, and also telegraphed to the Ministry of Justice on the 11th (23rd) November and the 25th Kinnon-i-Evel (6th January), submitting the illegality of their prolonged arrest. I beg herewith to inclose copy, with translation, of the former telegram.

No compromising documents seem to have been discovered either in their houses or personal possession, and the Judicial Inspectors consequently wrote, I am informed, to the Ministry of Justice on the 6th (18th) November last reporting the absence of evidence against the accused, and recommending their release. That recommendation, however, has not hitherto been acted upon.

Bagdasar is said to be upwards of 90 years of age, and the fifteen days' journey to Mosul at this season of the year is scarcely calculated to prolong his life.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 3 in No. 90.

Telegram addressed by Nigöos and Bagdasar to the Minister of Justice.

(Translation.) 11 *Teshrin-i-Sani*, 1313 (*November* 23, 1897).

IN consequence of the issue by the Mustantik at Mardin of a temporary arrest warrant, we have been detained for the last six months, without "Istintak," in the Madmouret-ul-Aziz prison. Under pretext of the non-arrival of the dossier† submitted to the Ministry of Justice by the Diarbekir Public Prosecutor by Takrir No. 63, dated the 4th (16th) June last, our petitions have met with no result, and we therefore appeal to your Excellency's mercy, and beg for our release.

(Signed) NIGÖOS.
BAGDASAR.

No. 91.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 176.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 24, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana respecting the state of affairs in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* "Mawakat-i-Tevkif Mezekeresi."
† Containing the Mustantik's Report.

Inclosure 1 in No. 91.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Hamidieh, near Adana, February* 28, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have this day completed a tour of inspection in the Djebel Béréket district of my province, visiting Ekbez, Islahié, Djebel Béréket, returning by Tchok Merjumen and Najarli, in the Payas district.

I am glad to report that I found all going quietly, the Government officials displaying at present a desire to satisfy the Christian inhabitants. It appears that strict orders to this effect have been received from Constantinople.

There is a general feeling prevailing that war with Russia will break out in the spring. Everywhere I was asked if this was likely. At Ekbez the Christians informed me that the Moslems had told them this, and that they said they would then cut all their throats throughout the country.

The Government officials display a desire to gain England's friendship, and tell me that this is what they now desire. I reply that we have always desired to assist Turkey. If a slight estrangement had been observed it was Turkey's fault for estranging us by barbarous and uncivilized acts, and by courting other alliances. Now that the Government was displaying a desire to govern fairly, we should not withhold our friendship.

Great poverty prevails everywhere. The Moslems are groaning under the burden of taxation as much as the Christians. Famine prices prevail this year, and I am asked when all this will end.

I again visited Najarli. I there distributed relief, and spoke seriously to the Commander of the soldiers as to his duty in preventing incursions on Christian lands. One man was beaten while ploughing in a field the day I was there. I sent the guard to seize the offender, but as he could not be found I said that the Mukhtar must be made responsible, and, if necessary, removed to Adana. I had already spoken of this to the Vali, and shall do so again when I see him in a few days. I shall have a few head Moslems removed if necessary, and then all will be quiet.

I have personally ascertained that the Christians are in possession of their lands in the Tchok Merjumen neighbourhood, and that no real cause of complaint exists there at present.

In fact, with a good prospect at present for the coming harvest, I am glad to be able to report an improved and improving condition in the southern parts of this vilayet. The one thing needful is money, and that is unfortunately scarce. After my visit to Hadjin district, shortly, I shall have visited all the important parts of this province, and shall have been able to give your Excellency my personal observations on its present state.

There are continued rumours everywhere of the calling out of the Reserve, and of a likely war with Russia. This idea has spread rapidly, and has now become general.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Adana, March* 9, 1898.

THERE is a plan, adopted recently by the Government of this vilayet, of sending Armenians to Selefkié for trial from all other parts of the province.

I have my suspicions that this is because the place is in a somewhat remote and unvisited part, so that attention is not thus drawn to their injustices.

I am therefore asking the Vali for an explanation of the reason, and at the same time I shall endeavour to find time shortly to visit Selefkié, and thus dispel the illusion that it is in a forgotten part of the world to me.

I shall then again report to your Excellency on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 92.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 177.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1898.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the alleged arbitrary action of the Mutessarif of Malatia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 92.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Kharput, March 9, 1898.*

WITH reference to my telegrams to your Excellency of the 2nd and 3rd instant, reporting that the dismissal of the Mutessarif of Malatia depended upon the result of an inquiry to be made there into alleged arbitrary action taken by him, I now have the honour to report the circumstances which appear to have rendered such inquiry unavoidable.

The Assistant Public Prosecutor at Malatia is said to have openly expressed his doubts as to the veracity of the tradition of the Prophet's miraculous ride from Medina to Jerusalem in one night, and of his subsequent ascension to Heaven on horseback. The Mutessarif, who seems to have been at no time very friendly towards the Assistant, accused him, thereupon, of impiety, and ordered him to be banished to Aleppo "for his own good." The Muhassébéji of Malatia, who is at present at Mexrch, recounts that the Assistant Procureur-Général was placed upon a horse, and his feet tied under the saddle-girths to prevent his escape during his journey under police escort to Aleppo; and that the mother of the accused, upon seeing her son's plight, fell down-stairs with grief and broke her leg.

The town of Malatia is a centre of many factions, and the Mutessarif would appear to have made many enemies there. A telegram, costing 7 Turkish liras, was recently wired, I am told, to the Palace by certain officers and other Mussulmans of that town complaining of his maladministration, and in exiling a judicial functionary upon so slight a pretext, without instructions from the Vali, he may be said to have widely overstepped the bounds of his authority.

The Judicial Inspectors, now at Diarbekir, have been ordered to proceed to Malatia with a view of investigating the responsibility devolving upon the Mutessarif and the Assistant in connection with the latter's exile.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 93.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 73.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 28, 1898.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 166 of the 16th instant, reporting the appointments of new Valis of Van, Koniah, Basrah, and Adana.

Your representations to the Porte pointing out the objections to Enis Pasha's appointment as Vali of Basrah are approved.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 94.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 179.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1898.*

ACTING upon the authorization conveyed in your Lordship's telegram No. 417 of the 6th December last, I have to-day addressed to the Sublime Porte a *note verbale* demanding that the claims for losses sustained by British subjects during the massacres which took place at Constantinople in August 1896 should be paid out of the Greek war indemnity.

This document, of which I have the honour to transmit a copy herewith, was drawn up at a meeting of Ambassadors. Although the Russian Ambassador has not been authorized to send it in the French and Italian Embassies have done so, and our example will probably be followed by those of Austria and Germany. My Austrian colleague has, however, informed me that, as the note is no longer identic, he intends to introduce some changes into it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Identic Note Verbale.

L'AMBASSADE de Sa Majesté Britannique a déjà plusieurs fois signalé à la Sublime Porte les pertes et les dommages éprouvés par les sujets Britanniques au cours des événements qui, en Août 1896, ont ensanglanté la capitale.

Les circonstances dans lesquelles les désordres ont eu lieu à Constantinople et qui ont formé l'objet de la note collective adressée par les Ambassadeurs à la Sublime Porte le 27 Août, 1896, ne laissent malheureusement aucun doute sur la responsabilité encourue par les autorités. Leur négligence a laissé libre cours à ces déplorables événements et les mesures nécessaires n'ont pas été prises pour les empêcher et pour châtier les coupables. La Sublime Porte voudra donc bien reconnaître que le Gouvernement Impérial se trouve dans l'obligation d'indemniser les ressortissants Britanniques qui ont droit à la protection des autorités Ottomanes et qui ont subi des pertes au cours des excès rappelés ci-dessus.

L'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique a déjà adressé à la Sublime Porte le 27 Août, 1896, une note collective précisant les préjudices causés à ses nationaux, lors des massacres de Constantinople du 26 Août, 1896.

Elle a pris soin d'indiquer qu'elle considérait le Gouvernement Impérial comme tenu de réparer les dommages causés à ses ressortissants. Elle a reçu à ce sujet un certain nombre de requêtes contenant des demandes d'indemnité dont elle a pris soin de vérifier le bien fondé.

L'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique n'hésite pas à penser que la Sublime Porte ne soit, comme elle, désireuse de régler une série d'affaires qui ne peuvent que perpétuer le souvenir de ces tristes événements, et estime qu'il y a lieu d'examiner d'un commun accord les réclamations des ressortissants Britanniques, d'établir sans délai le montant des pertes réellement subies par eux à la suite des troubles de 1896, et d'appliquer à ces réparations nécessaires une partie des ressources que le paiement de l'indemnité de guerre fera prochainement entrer dans les caisses du Trésor Impérial.

L'Ambassade de Sa Majesté, convaincue que la Sublime Porte reconnaîtra la justesse de ces observations, la prie de lui faire connaître sans retard qu'elle adhère aux propositions qui viennent d'être formulées.

L'Ambassade de Sa Majesté se réserve de présenter ultérieurement des demandes d'indemnité pour les dommages éprouvés par ses ressortissants dans les provinces.

Constantinople, le 24 Mars, 1898.

No. 95.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 180. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1898.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch, I have the honour to add the following explanations of the delay in sending in the *note verbale* demanding that the claims for losses arising out of the events at Constantinople in 1896 should be paid out of the Greek war indemnity.

On the receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 417 of the 6th December, I did all in my power to induce my colleagues to agree to an identic representation to the Porte. The French Chargé d'Affaires drew up the draft of an identic note, which the Ambassadors declared had their personal approval, although all but myself felt obliged to submit the text to their Governments.

After some delay, it was understood that all of my colleagues, including M. Jadowsky, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, had received authority to present the note, with the exception of the German Ambassador, who kept us waiting for several weeks longer before he announced that he had received the necessary permission from Berlin. At last it was agreed, at a meeting held in the early part of this month, that we should all send in the note on the 9th March, and the matter appeared settled. But the next day M. Zinoview wrote to Baron Calice as Doyen, saying that he had acted under a misapprehension. On returning home he had discovered that he had no authority to join in any such demand as that which we proposed to address to the Porte, and, further, that M. Jadowsky had never referred the matter to St. Petersburgh, as he was supposed to have done. We therefore agreed to a further delay while M. Zinoview submitted the proposed note to his Government, which he declared he could not do by telegraph. After some ten days had elapsed, he stated that the result of his application was that he had been forbidden to join in our demand.

The French and Italian Ambassadors and myself then agreed to send in the note in its original form. The Austrian Ambassador states that he hopes to send it in, but with some modifications. I have not yet learnt the intentions of the German Ambassador.

The note only deals with losses suffered in Constantinople, but contains a reserve as to similar damages sustained in Anatolia.

The French Embassy intend to immediately send in a second note claiming similar compensation for these damages, which, in their case, are very considerable, as many religious establishments under French protection in Anatolia suffered severely. I also propose to address a supplementary note presenting the few claims concerning British subjects in Asia Minor, which I have already had the honour to submit to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 96.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 181. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1898.*

WITH reference to my despatches numbered 179 and 180 of this day relative to the demand for payment out of the Greek war indemnity of the sum claimed on behalf of British subjects for losses sustained during the massacres, I have the honour to point out that this demand will probably be refused or disregarded by the Porte, which has already repudiated any responsibility whatever for the claims in question.

I would therefore submit to your Lordship that, if possible, steps should be taken to attach so much of the funds advanced for payment of the Greek war indemnity as will be sufficient to cover the amount claimed by Her Majesty's Government and the French Government on behalf of their subjects.

As guarantors of the loan, the two Powers would appear entitled to take such a step, and unless it is taken, there is little probability of the claims ever being settled.

The amount of our claim for losses in Constantinople alone is over 30,000*l.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 97.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 75.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 29, 1898, 8·50 P.M.*

I AM sending home by next messenger a copy of Yusuf Yunan's letter mentioned by Mr. Stevenson in his question of the 24th March.

The letter has only just been communicated to me.